

CHILDREN'S PRAYERS

RECORDED BY THEIR MOTHER

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## CHILDREN'S PRAYERS



Darr, Mrs. Vera (Campbell)

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Recorded by their Mother

THE PILGRIM PRESS

BOSTON

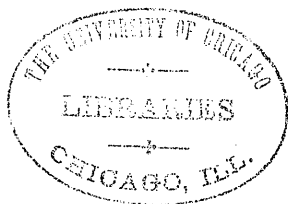
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TO VIOLET

Whose Care for the Physical  
Details of the Household  
for Ten Years  
Has Made Possible the Keeping  
of This Record



## FOREWORD TO OTHER MOTHERS

This record is merely the attempt of one mother to gather together her notations of incidents or remarks — and especially of prayers — which have helped her to see her children as citizens and potential builders of the City of God.



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# I

## *How the Record Was Started*





## I

IT ALL began by my reading Mrs. Mumford's *The Dawn of Religion in the Mind of a Child*, just before my oldest boy was four. He had begun to "say his prayers" almost as soon as he had learned to talk. To his first spontaneous petitions which followed his "Now I lay me down to sleep" (when he reached the place where he began to ask God to bless mother and daddy and little brother) he added, "an' the ice man." The black-eyed Italian who balanced the tub of ice so deftly on top of his head was the first helper outside the home to awaken a social consciousness of the wider group beyond "The House with the White Door" (as he called the old downtown New York house where we were then living), who ministered daily to the needs of those dwelling within its walls.

Although I had heard the tragic tale of the two children who were discussing the meaning of "Fysha-dy" after they had said their evening prayer ("F I sh' die before I wake"), I had, nevertheless, let the children use the "Now I lay me" as the

basis of their prayer each night. Its constant usage since childhood had made me think of its phraseology as a kind of childish adaptation of the spirit of Jesus' prayer, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." Moreover, the opening phrase has greatly endeared itself to me of recent years because of the fact that they were the last words spoken by my mother. Just before she took the anæsthetic preceding the operation from which she never regained consciousness, she smiled at my sister and said, "Now I lay me down to sleep." So I cannot help letting the boys go on using that same phrase as the beginning of their talk with the heavenly Father just before they go to sleep each night.

Instead of letting this much used phrase begin a purely individual prayer, however, it may be adapted to follow the wider scope of a child's interests like this:

Now I lay me down to sleep.  
Heavenly Father, safely keep  
All thy little children here  
And in all lands, far and near.

However, Mrs. Mumford helped me to realize that a mother has a far greater responsibility than merely to teach her children to "say their prayers." Hers is that higher privilege of really giving them opportunities to pray — to say their own prayer in their own way, until they feel that they are really communing with the heavenly Father.

The record of actual prayers of real children which Mrs. Mumford gives in her book stimulated a desire on my part to write down any particularly significant prayers which might come from the hearts of my own children. Consequently I began to record the prayers which seemed especially revealing, either of growth of understanding on their part or of any particular phase of their interests; and, having filled one book of one hundred and seventy pages, I now have a second record-book almost half full. The boy who was four when I began keeping this record is now ten, and two other boys have passed the four-year period. Their prayers have been one

method of keeping account of the variety of experience at different ages and also of the unfolding individuality of each child as his interests widen and his understanding of life deepens.

Sometimes the petitions of the evening prayer are directly traceable to events of the day; as, for instance, after the oldest boy had come in with tar stains all over a new suit which he was wearing for the first time. He prayed, "Help me to *think* before I ever do anything that is wrong again, and help me always to do what is right." But on other occasions I have wondered just how some particular thought ever happened to enter the small head. One notable instance of this occurred one hot August evening when this same boy prayed "for all the people that fall down on the ice." And another night in the middle of February he said, "Thank you for gardens and worms and birds and teachers. Amen."

Any one who has read A. A. Milne's "Vespers," which he wrote for the Queen's Doll House, feels certain that he

must have observed a real child at his evening devotion — and that he must have observed him very often. The constant interruptions between the various petitions as the events of the day come into his thoughts, the occasional desire for suggestions on the part of a three- or four-year-old, and the hushed sense of awe on the part of any adult near enough to feel himself participating in the communion — all these experiences are very familiar to every parent who really endeavors to share his child's growing religious experience. So familiar, indeed, are these incidents, that this poem, above all others in that charming volume, *When We Were Very Young*, ought to find a sympathetic response in the heart of every true lover of children.

When our oldest boy passed his sixth birthday, I was a little perplexed about the question of going on hearing his prayer each night before he went to sleep. He was always so eager for me to be with him when he prayed that on evenings when I was going out to din-

ner, he often voluntarily went to bed an hour before his usual time so that before I left the house he might be

“All tucked in bed,  
His prayers all said.”

One evening when this had occurred just before a dinner I was attending where Professor Coe was one of the guests, I asked him if he felt that I was making a mistake to let my boy continue this sense of dependence upon me at his prayer time, or if I ought to be encouraging him to feel that he was really talking to the heavenly Father all alone. I have always been grateful for Professor Coe's answer, for some of the most significant prayers have come since that night. Said he, “I am coming to feel more and more, that we never truly pray unless we pray together.”

If we are not to teach our children “prayers” but are rather to help them really to pray for themselves, are there no ways in which we can help them to grow in their understanding of what prayer really is — and also in their ability to

express themselves? Does it help children to read to them prayers which others have written? I feel very strongly that just as the reading of Rauschenbush's great book of social prayers, *For God and the People*, may enrich the religious life of an adult and vastly increase his concern for "all sorts and conditions of men," so may readings from a volume like Lucy Peabody's *Prayers for Little Children*, or John Martin's book of *Prayers for Little Men and Women* help to link the child's prayers to the ordinary experiences of every day. The fact that some of these prayers really "find" the children where they are, was impressed upon me one night shortly after this latter book had been given to our oldest boy on his fourth birthday. I had been reading one of the evening prayers as we sat around the fire just before the boys went up to bed. It started out,

"Dear God, I'll soon be in my bed  
To go to sleep and rest;  
And thoughts will come into my head—  
Please make them just the best."

After we had gone upstairs and the boys were ready for bed, I said to the oldest one, "Don't you want to say your prayer?" "I did say my prayer, mother," he replied; "you read it downstairs. That was what I wanted to say." The fact that it had really meant something to him became evident several months later, when six or eight lines of this prayer, which he had not heard read again in the meantime, became part of his own purely spontaneous evening prayer.

Our four- and six-year-old sons, who sleep in the same room, gave me further assurance of my conviction that prayers read to the children may mean something to them. The incident also showed me that even a four-year-old feels a desire for purely spontaneous expression. When the younger one prayed he said, "Thank you, heavenly Father, for all the lovely things that came at Christmas time and all our lovely Easter things and all our happy days. Amen." Turning to me, he said, "Wasn't that a nice prayer, mother?" Then, addressing himself to



his older brother, he said, "John, you say what I said — don't just say, 'Now I lay me down to sleep.'" To this John replied, "I'll say my own prayer," so he began, "Thank you, Little Father, for this happy day. Help us to be kind and thoughtful in our play. Help us never to fight or push or shove, so that all our days can be happy days. Amen." Then, to me, "Wasn't that a nicer prayer, mother? I heard that once out of a book." Evidently a phrase of a prayer read to him from some source — perhaps from the "Sunday Paper," as the boys call *The Mayflower* which they bring home from Sunday school each week — had struck a responsive note in his mind and had remained there. Just why he used the phrase "Little Father" I cannot understand unless, in his determination to make his prayer distinctively his own, he decided to employ a phrase different from the one which his little brother had used.

Last week I saw for the first time in many years a nephew who used often to

be left in my care when he was a little lad between six and twelve. The last time I had the privilege of tucking him into bed and hearing his evening prayer was shortly before his twelfth birthday. He was beginning even then to pray, "Help me to grow up to be a fine, strong, splendid man." This prayer has been so fully and completely answered in his clean, straightforward manhood, that seeing him, at twenty-three, able to look the universe squarely in the eye, feeling completely at home in it as the home of his heavenly Father, gave me a most comforting assurance not only that "as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," but also that as a child prayeth from his heart, so shall he ultimately become.

## II

### *Prayers of Gratitude*



## II

**B**EFORE our youngest boy was two, while he was still unable even to say "mother," he could utter a very articulate "thank you" whenever I gave him a piece of bread. In similar manner the older boys, long before they had any very clearly conceived ideas of the heavenly Father as the Giver of all good, felt a desire to thank Some One for their daily food.

"The Three Graces" most common at our table are the very familiar old German one, —

"God is great and God is good,  
And we thank him for this food";

a more modern one from John Martin's book of *Prayers for Little Men and Women*, —

"Thank you, God, for food and love  
That you have sent us from above";

and the chorus of "Can a Little Child Like Me," which the children often like to sing at the table, —

"Father, we thank thee,  
Father, we thank thee,  
Father in heaven, we thank thee."

Sometimes the four-year-old insists on singing the entire song through before he eats his dinner.

However, there have been a number of times when the boys have wanted to take turns asking the blessing themselves. That children naturally think "grace before meat" fitting, is evidenced by this phrase from one of the boys' evening prayers: "Help all the little children to remember their prayers before they go to bed and before they eat their food." I here record a few of these spontaneous expressions of gratitude.

When the oldest boy was four, as he was one day sitting at the table gnawing a chicken bone, he said, "Aren't we glad to thank God for our nice strong teeth, so we can chew hard things like bones and toast! If we didn't have them, we could only eat ice-cream and carrots and peas and bread and soft things like that."

Another day his younger brother, then aged three, began to sing at the conclusion of his luncheon, "Heavenly Father, thank you for my good luncheon. I like it."

One evening, after a particularly happy afternoon at the home of a friend, Mrs. W——, the oldest one said as his grace at supper, "Heavenly Father, thank you for the happy time we have had this afternoon. Thank you for Mrs. W——, and everybody, and thank you for our food. Amen."

Once one of the boys prayed thus before luncheon: "Thank you, heavenly Father, for our nice luncheon and for all the good food that you send us. And thank you for Jesus. Amen." Before supper of the same day: "Dear God, thank you for our nice food and all the food you send us. And thank you for everybody we love, and thank you for our mothers who make things for us. Amen."

Another evening when the children sat down for supper the oldest boy folded his hands and said, "Dear heavenly Father, we like the good food you send. Amen."

One Hallowe'en the children had four jack o' lanterns, which they had made, in the center of the supper table. As we sat a moment with the light from the pump-

kins illumining all the faces around the table, the nine-year-old said, "Can't we have a special grace tonight?"

Of course I said, "Why, certainly. Won't you ask the blessing for us, George?"

He prayed, "Dear God, thank you for our being here together. Take care of daddy and bring him back safely. Help him to know how much we love him, and help us to remember how much he loves us. And help us to do what we know he wants us to while he is away."

The next noon the six-year-old wanted to say grace, and he concluded with, "And help daddy always to know that he can trust us."

One day the three-year-old said, "Dear heavenly Father, help me to be a good boy — and thank you for all our good food. Amen."

After one of the boys had been sick, at the first meal when he was able to be back at the table with his brothers, the oldest one said, "Dear heavenly Father, thank you for helping John to get all well



again, and thank you for everything that you have made."

One evening at the beginning of our vacation in the Pocono Mountains, after the second boy had said grace, the oldest boy added, "Dear God, thank you for engines and trains that bring us to lovely places like Pocono." The three-year-old was silent, but later on in the middle of the meal we noticed him folding his hands and bowing his head reverently. Of course all conversation instantly ceased and every one waited quietly while Billy said, "Dear God, thank you for my bluebird cup and for my food and for our lovely home and for the train that brought us here. Amen."

A few days later the same three-year-old, after surveying the table at supper-time, said, "Thank you for our bread and milk and sugar and flowers. Amen." Another evening, keeping his head bowed, but looking around the table (as though taking an inventory while he was saying grace) he said, "Thank you for our milk and thank you for our bread

and thank you for our sugar and thank you for our dates in our rice."

One day when the oldest boy was almost six, in asking the blessing, he said, "Dear heavenly Father, thank you for everything you give us. Bless the poor people, and help other people to think more about the poor people who haven't enough to eat." Another day before breakfast he said, "Dear heavenly Father, thank you for all our happy days and for everything that you send us. Help every one in the world to have a good morning breakfast."

At luncheon one day the second boy, then not quite five, wanted to give thanks, so he said, "Thank you, dear God, for our good food, and thank you for the brook that gives us our nice clean water, and thank you for the cows that give us our good milk."

The next day the same thought took a slightly different form when he said:

"Dear God, thank you for our food;  
And thank you, brook, for our water;  
And thank you, dear cow, for our milk."

Later he said one day before lunch, "Dear heavenly Father, thank you for all our friends and all the animals. The cows are so good to us that our happy hearts are so grateful that we don't want to shove or kick or hit any more." Another illustration of his tendency to make the transition from thanks to the heavenly Father to a definite expression of gratitude to the medium through which the good gift comes, was evidenced a year later when in his evening prayer on three successive evenings he said:

"Thank you, God, for the animals and for the green grass and for the nice water to drink.

"Thank you, dear heavenly Father, for the cows who give us our milk and for the hens who give us our eggs and for the sheep who give us our clothes.

"Thank you, dear cows, for our nice fresh milk; and thank you, dear hens, for our good fresh eggs; and thank you, dear sheep, for our warm, warm wool."

Another evidence of this tendency to trace good things back to their source

occurred one evening recently. The boys' father had given each of them a piece of sweet chocolate after supper, and their "thank you" to him grew in a very interesting way. After the third boy (who is now seven) had said, "Thank you, Daddy, for giving us the chocolate," he added, "and daddy will have to say, 'Thank you, storekeeper, for selling us the chocolate.' "

Here the ten-year-old spoke up: "And the storekeeper will have to say, 'Thank you, factoryman, for making the chocolate.' "

After a moment the eight-year-old added, "And the factoryman will have to say, 'Thank you, trees, for giving us the chocolate.' And the trees will have to look up and say, 'Thank you, God, for helping us to grow.' "

Although a child's sense of gratitude may begin with thanks for his daily food, it by no means ends there. I am sure that if I had attempted to write *Prayers for Little Children*, I should never have dreamed of including as wide a range of

interests as my boys have revealed in their own spontaneous prayers. The three- and four-year-olds do not get far beyond the range of the things which they can touch and see and handle. Yet sometimes the sheer joy of living finds lyric expression even in a four-year-old. One morning while watching a peculiarly beautiful sunrise, our oldest boy — then four — seized a curtain rod which he used as a trumpet; then, leaning upon a stool, he sang over and over with a joy which seemed akin to that which the birds try to express at the rising of the sun:

“Thank you, God, for the morning star  
And the beautiful sunrise over the moun-  
tains.”

But these expressions of gratitude for the beauties of nature often link themselves with an appreciation of the things which meet merely physical needs. On the evening of this same day, for instance, this was his evening prayer: “Thank you, God, for the lovely sunrise and for flowers and jelly and rice pudding.”

Another day earth and sky met in a morning prayer: "Thank you for the shoemaker and clouds. Thank you for the sky and everything." At Thanksgiving time that year this same four-year-old said he was thankful for chipmunks and squirrels and birds and trees, and Junior (a friend who was away at college) and — the baby Moses!

One evening he prayed, "Dear God, thank you for the night and for the day and for everything. Bless my family and help me to do all the *right* things mother asks me to do." (And mother says "Amen" to the qualifying adjective!)

During the summer preceding his fourth birthday he prayed one evening in the midst of a particularly severe thunderstorm, "Dear God, thank you for giving the flowers a drink, and thank you for my daddy."

Other evening prayers of this same summer were:

"Thank you for the birds and thank you for the pine trees and thank you for our nice pollywogs, and thank you for the

mountains and everything in the world. Thank you for our neighbors and everybody who comes here to bring us things, and thank you for my daddy and for the good time we have had today. And thank you for granddaddy and everybody in the world. Amen."

"Thank you for the birds and thank you for the clouds and thank you for our neighbors and thank you for our houses and thank you for our nice smooth beds to sleep in, and thank you for our mothers. Thank you for being so good to us, dear God, and please bless everybody in the world."

One evening after his bedtime story he prayed, "Dear God, thank you for all the lovely stories in the book and thank you for Jesus and the heavenly Father."

After watching a lovely sunset one evening, he prayed, "Thank you for the sky. I know that's where you are, God, up there making the stars and sunshine. You make the stars out of gold, and I know what the sunshine's made of — it's made out of happy boys." Then he added,

“Dear God, thank you for the lovely sunset, and for the blue and red and all the beautiful colors, and for the sunshine all made out of happy boys. Amen.”

Another evening this was his prayer: “Dear God, thank you for my mother. Help me to show my gratitude by doing things sooner when she asks me. Thank you for sending the trees and flowers and merry sunshine and all the animals — and I like everything that you have made. Thank you for cities — but I don’t like war.”

Other expressions of gratitude that summer were:

“Thank you for flowers and seeds and  
back yards.

Thank you for the birds and the stars.

Thank you, dear God, for the lovely sky  
that you have made.

I just love you, dear God, for making  
everything so beautiful.”

One night, just before getting into bed, the four-year-old said, “Isn’t it good of the heavenly Father to give us the night so we can sleep?” And another night after he was all tucked in he said, “Isn’t



it good of the heavenly Father to have the sheep give us wool so we can have nice soft covers to keep us warm!"

One night the same summer his little brother prayed: "Thank you for our covers and for sheep and for our clothes and for our B. V. D.'s and for our shoes. Amen."

On another occasion he said, "Thank you for our food and for Uncle Gilbert and all the animals." (Uncle Gilbert has a dairy farm, and his accounts of it are a constant source of delight to the boys.)

The last night of the old year, the oldest boy — then well past five — prayed, "Dear heavenly Father, I like everything that you send me. Thank you for fathers and mothers and all the animals and trees and flowers and birds and for our daddies. And thank you for snow and for our sleds and for miners who dig up coal to keep us warm — and for our houses. Amen."

The wider range of interest after passing the fifth birthday manifested itself

increasingly, as more and more of the helpers outside the home were mentioned in the oldest boy's prayers.

"Dear God, thank you for our happy day and for mother and daddy and granddaddy and all the people you have given us, who make things for us to wear and our food and our beds and the nice books to paint in and books our mothers read us the stories out of, and thank you for everything you do for us. Amen."

Another night: "Thank you for the sky and all the birds and animals and for all our dishes and for our slippers and bathrobes and all the clothes we wear. Thank you for all the men who work to make things for us to use, and thank you for all the little boys that grow up to be big men and work. Amen."

"Dear God, thank you for the lovely day we have had. Thank you for our mothers and help us always to make them happy. Thank you for all the people who work to make our clothes and our beds and aprons for mothers to wear when they work. And thank you for the men

who fix the electric lights — and carpenters and everybody. And thank you for everything that you have made — all the birds and animals and trees and everything in the world.”

“Thank you for this nice, nice lovely world and thank you for all the people who make things for us, who make our houses and picture-frames and everything; but especially the things we need most — our houses and our clothes.”

“Thank you for trees and birds and for beds and mothers, and thank you for daddies and little brothers and sisters, and thank you for the grass and trees and everything that you have made. Thank you for the farmers and everybody who works to give us things to eat and things to wear, and thank you for toys to play with and nice, nice back yards to play in. Thank you for this lovely, lovely day and for all our friends.”

“Thank you for the grass and trees and flowers and for the nice men who come around to fix pipes and put up fences and build houses and everything. Thank you

for all our neighbors, and take care of everybody in France and Egypt and everywhere tonight. Amen."

"Bless all the men that work in factories to make our clothes, and carpenters; and thank you for all the stores around here that have food and toys; and thank you for policemen, and for parks and grass and trees and flowers, and trains that carry us from place to place, and for boats that take people across the ocean."

"Thank you for the sky and sunshine and for crayons and engineers, for playmates and toys and trees, for food and grocery wagons and choo-choo trains, and boats that cross the river; and thank you for tables and for chairs to sit in when we eat our food."

"Thank you for artists who make pictures for us to put up in our rooms so we will like them better, and thank you for shades that keep out the light when we don't want it to shine in our eyes."

"Thank you for our houses to live in and for automobiles to take rides in and for fire engines to put out fires, and for

blacksmiths and street cleaners, and for our food and wheat, and for farmers who plow the fields and help the wheat to grow. Thank you for the stores where we buy our food so that everybody can get what they need — 'cause if everything was just piled together some people might just come and grab a lot and not leave enough for the other people. Thank you for engines that take ships across the ocean, so that people can go to far-away lands, and thank you for trains that take people across the country to California and China — only when they go to China they have to go in a boat; and thank you for grass and trees and flowers."

Sometimes gratitude for "automobiles to take rides in" was linked with expressions of thanksgiving for the heavenly Father's care when danger had threatened. One day while we were driving, George, in crossing the road on an errand, very narrowly escaped being struck by an automobile. While we were on our way home Billy began to sing, —

"Lord of all, to thee we raise  
This our hymn of grateful praise."

That night in his prayer, Billy said,  
"Thank you for not letting George get  
killed this afternoon."

And George said in his prayer, "Thank  
you for keeping me from getting hit by  
the automobile this afternoon."

On another occasion when his young  
brother (then two years old) had fallen  
from a second-story window and had  
been able to get up and walk into the  
house afterward, George prayed, "Thank  
you for taking care of Guthrie today and  
not letting him get hurt when he fell out  
the window."

The oldest boy was five when he  
prayed, "Thank you for everything that  
you have made, for you are so good to  
everybody and like to do things for them.  
Thank you for grass and trees and flow-  
ers, and for bread and milk, and for all  
our good food, and for flowers that grow  
in people's gardens, and for trees to  
climb. Thank you for mothers and dad-  
dies that make things for us, like bows

and arrows to shoot with, and thank you for Indians to be friendly with and for Eskimos and everybody in the world — and thank you for our happy day.”

“Thank you for grass and flowers and for stones to write with when we haven’t any chalk, and for mothers and fathers and for hospitals to go to when you are sick, and for nurses and doctors, and thank you for brothers and sisters, and for packing-boxes to make houses out of, and for food and everything that makes us grow, and for tables and chairs, and beds to rest in when we are tired, and thank you for all our friends. Thank you for everything that you have made in this lovely world — thank you for everything very, very much.”

“Thank you for putting Jesus into the world to help us know what is right to do, and thank you for You, because you can guard us better than anybody else. Thank you for our happy day, and help me to be a very kind boy tomorrow.”

Gratitude for a happy day finds constant expression in all the boys’ prayers;

but one night after a misty, foggy day when they had had to stay in the house, the five-year-old boy prayed: "Thank you for daddy and my brothers and for the baby and mother. Thank you for the trees and flowers and all the lovely things that you have put on this world. Thank you for all these happy days — but this wasn't one of them."

Another day which came very near not being "one of them" came three years later. The oldest boy, then eight, had arranged for a picnic with some of his especial friends — a two-family picnic in which little brothers were to be included. In his eagerness to get downtown in a hurry for an errand on which I had sent him, George snatched the wagon away from his younger brother, pushing him down, then dashed off. In a moment John came in weeping, his stocking badly torn and his knee bruised and bleeding.

While the necessary changes in apparel were being made and the wounds bandaged, it became clear in the minds of both parents that so serious an error could not



go uncorrected. Therefore when George returned from his errand we told him that he could not go to the picnic. He was, of course, nearly broken-hearted at the thought of missing the picnic. While we were doing our best to remain firm in spite of his tears, in came John, the injured one, with the most pleading look that I have ever seen. He stood a moment in the doorway, then came toward us and said, at first falteringly, then with increasing firmness, "Mother — Daddy — don't you think we'd better give George one more chance? We'll all have so much more fun at the picnic if George is along."

What could mere parents do in the way of discipline in the face of a forgiving spirit like that?

It was therefore arranged that George might remain behind to help prepare the luncheon, then come on with his father at noon. On the way to the appointed place of meeting, John said, "Don't you think it is a good thing we decided to give George another chance? 'Cause now

I think he'll remember not to shove any more."

The day was a glorious one and there was no reference to the events of the morning to mar its happiness. That night at bedtime George, after giving thanks for the happy day, prayed, "Help me to remember not to shove any of my brothers again."

After Billy, the six-year-old, had finished his prayer, he said, "John, aren't you going to thank God for all the nice things that happened today?"

John said, "Oh, yes"; then in a very tender, conversational tone said, "Thank you, God, for coming into my mind to-day and telling me to go to my mother and ask her and then go to my father and ask him to give George another chance. Thank you for this happy day. Amen."

When the oldest boy was six he prayed one night: "Thank you for green grass and trees and flowers and vegetables and stars and the moon. Thank you for Violet who gives us our baths, and thank you for water and steam, and thank you for

all the men who make things, and thank you for everything in the world.

"Thank you for all the lovely things you have made—for every flower and every tree and every bird and every animal and every beast and every fish and for stones and cement. Thank you for houses and horses and wagons and thank you for mothers and fathers who try to keep little boys from being sick, and help all the people in the world to be happier."

Perhaps the highest social attitude evidenced in any of the boys' prayers was revealed one evening after they had been helping a neighbor chop wood all the afternoon. That night the oldest boy—then almost six—prayed: "Dear heavenly Father, thank you for the fun of working together. Help everybody to know how much better it is to do things together than it is for everybody to go off and try to do things alone and somebody try to be boss all the time. Help all the people all over the world to want to work together."



### III

### *Advent Prayers*



### III

**A**LL my life I shall feel grateful to Adelaide Case for telling me about a book which her young nephew particularly enjoyed. It was a book published by the Milton Bradley Company, *All About Johnnie Jones*, by Carolyn Verhoeff, with an introduction by Patty Hill. The pictures in it are very quaintly old-fashioned; but the subject matter of the book certainly deals with the eternal verities, and it ought for an indefinite period to be a boon to mothers of boys under six. All of the stories in it are delightful; but the one which met my particular need at the time I bought the book was "The Coming of Little Brother." It was the greatest possible help in preparing the three boys for the advent of their little brother, who was to arrive during the summer.

The oldest boy — then almost six — had sufficiently pleasant recollections of the arrival of his second little brother (who had come when he was three) to lead him to pray sometimes like this:

"Dear God, please send me another baby because I love John and Billy so much and I love mother and daddy; but I love you best of all, dear God, because you send me the flowers and the trees and the stars and because you are my Friend.

"I love you very much, dear God, you are so good to us and you love everybody and love to do things for other people and you give us little babies forever after. Amen."

As soon as he knew that a new baby was coming, the knowledge seemed to awaken all the chivalry of which his five-year-old heart was capable, and he became exceptionally thoughtful of my welfare. One day when we were cleaning in the nursery I started to move a large box. Instantly he took it from me, saying, "You mustn't do that, Mother. Let me do it—that's a man's job! Suppose anything should happen to you before that baby comes—who would take care of it?"

Another day when I was working on the layette the boys came into my room,



and each of them wanted to help get things ready for the little new baby. After the oldest one had worked very seriously for a long time on a piece of an old blanket which I let him take to make a "coat," he exclaimed, "When that baby gets old enough to appreciate this, won't he feel proud to think that I made it for him!"

During the time preceding the arrival of the baby his prayers reflected his concern for me.

"Help me to be a kind, kind boy. Please help mother to be strong and well so that our baby can be strong and well."

"Help me to be a good boy tomorrow to make mother happy so that she can be strong and well to make the baby strong and well; and help all the children to make their mothers happy. Amen."

As the time drew nearer for the baby to come, we took our bedtime stories from *All About Johnnie Jones* almost every night. First there was the story of "Johnnie Jones' Birthday Party" very soon

after brother number three had had his own third birthday. On that particular day the three boys happened to meet a gentleman who had not seen them for a year. In trying to distinguish them one from another, he patted each one in turn on the head, saying, "This is George and this is John and this is Billy — and Billy is the baby." Instantly the three-year-old replied, "Oh, no — I'm not the baby. Our baby is coming from God!"

The next night the story of "The Sleeping Beauty," with its lovely symbolism of the awakening earth, deepened their appreciation of the miracle that was taking place all around them in the unfolding life of the spring.

Some time later, after they had been watching a caterpillar, came the story of "Johnnie Jones and the Butterfly." The boys had once seen a butterfly just after it had emerged from the cocoon, and they had been deeply impressed by the wonder of this natural process.

One night after they had climbed a tree on their playground to see the tiny

baby robins which had come out of the wonderful blue eggs they had discovered the week before in that same nest, of course the natural story to read was "Mr. and Mrs. Bird and the Baby Birds."

This all led up in a simple and beautiful way to the story of "The Coming of Little Brother." After the first night we read it, the boys called for it many times. They especially like the ending:

" 'He is your Little Brother,' mother said softly; 'your little brother to love and take care of all your life. You will always remember that, won't you?'

"And Johnnie Jones always did."

When the time was fulfilled and the new baby arrived at nine o'clock one lovely morning in August, the boys started off to their playground with the joyous knowledge that "Little Brother" had come at last. The director of the playground told me afterward that the oldest boy was singularly silent for a long time; then at last he came up to tell her his very important bit of news. "I have a new little brother, Miss Peggy," he

said. "And we are going to call him Jesus because he is so perfect."

At last noon came and the trio tiptoed quietly upstairs for their first peep at Little Brother. As I watched the joy shining in their eyes as they stood in awe before this new gift from the heavenly Father, I felt that the glory of Raphael's cherubs was commonplace compared to the radiance which shone there in the faces of my own three boys, grouped reverently about that tiny new baby in his basket. Before a word had been spoken, we all began spontaneously to sing, "We thank the heavenly Father, kind and good."

When the boys came in that evening for a good-night glimpse of Little Brother before they went to bed, each in turn came quietly over and knelt beside my bed. Without a suggestion from any one the three-year-old said, "Thank you, God, for our baby." The four-year-old followed, saying, "Thank you for sending our Little Brother." And the five-year-old prayed, "Dear God, thank you

for the dear little new baby. Help him always to be good, and help him to be strong and well."

While I was in bed the three-year-old prayed several nights, "Help mother to get better and help the baby to get bigger."

One night when one of the helpers in our home had been having difficulty with a wisdom tooth, this same three-year-old prayed, "Bless Sophie and help her teeth to grow and bless the baby and help him to grow, and bless Jesus."

The boys' devotion to the baby grew constantly; and when they were in the room while I was putting him to bed, they would often give expression to thoughts like these:

"Aren't we glad God sent us our baby!"

"Aren't we glad God sent us our dear cute little baby!" — this from the three-year-old.

"Mother, didn't God send us the best baby in all the world?" asked the four-year-old one evening. Then later he said, "Mother, God did send us the best baby

in all the world, didn't he? I'm going to ask him!"

Another night he said, "I think God sends us the very best babies that he has, don't you?"

One night the five-year-old prayed, "Thank you for fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters and for the baby and mother. Thank you for the trees and flowers and all the lovely things you have put in this world."

A great many of the boys' prayers that fall reminded me of one which Mrs. Mumford records: "Thank you for being so clever as to make beautiful little babies and all things like that."

With the approach of Christmas that year, all the Nativity songs and stories seemed to mean more than ever to the boys. I was reading *The Boy Jesus and His Companions*, by Rufus Jones, to the oldest boy; and on three successive evenings, following our reading, he prayed:

"Thank you for our happy day, and thank you for everything in this lovely, lovely world, and thank you for sending

Jesus to this world to help us know what is right and what is wrong."

"Thank you for Jesus, and thank you for You, because you can guard us better than anybody else."

"Thank you for putting Jesus on the world to help us know what is right to do. Help me to be a very kind boy tomorrow, and help all the other boys and girls to be nice so that they may not make their mothers unhappy."

That year, for the first time, the oldest boy went a-caroling on Christmas Eve with the children of the neighborhood. When they came to sing before his own home he saw his own Little Brother in his mother's arms, with his other two brothers standing beside her — framed in the window behind the Christmas candle which threw its light out upon the upturned faces of the carolers. The true joy of Christmas shone in his eyes as he came in to get ready for bed. After he was all tucked in he sang his own improvised Christmas carol to his own Little Brother, whose crib was in his room:

“On Christmas eve the stars shine bright.  
On Christmas eve the chimes ring.  
The brightest star will lead you to a baby —  
It is the star of Bethlehem!

When the baby awoke in the morning  
He found he was lying in a bed of hay.  
He was the baby who was sent from God.  
Rejoice, rejoice,  
Rejoice, give thanks and sing!”



## IV

### *Birthday Prayers*



## IV

**I**N practically every home birthdays are welcomed and are regarded as days worthy of recognition. They are usually looked forward to and looked back upon as especially delightful events. In any home they may well become the occasion for special prayers of thanksgiving, a time when the entire family seems to be drawn closer to one another — and to the heavenly Father.

On the day when our third boy celebrated his third birthday, a friend took us for a beautiful drive in the morning, and in the afternoon several friends came in to help make the day a happy one for Billy boy. That night his six-year-old brother prayed, "Thank you for cake and ice-cream and for parties, and for our neighbors who have automobiles and take us out for rides — and for our kind mother and daddy." The little Birthday Boy himself prayed thus: "Thank you for our ride, and thank you for taking care of mother and daddy, and thank you for our food."

When the boy in between these two

(the Middle-Sized Bear, as it were) had his fourth birthday, a friend made this the occasion for sending the three boys a toy automobile big enough for them to ride in — one at a time. John, too, had asked a few friends in to help him celebrate the day, and one of the gifts which a little boy had brought him seemed to make a particularly pleasing impression upon him. He prayed that night: "Thank you for our wonderful big automobile and for my nice boat and for my party, and thank you for my funny joke clown so that all of us could have a good joke — 'cause I like to laugh, dear God."

This habit of enumeration revealed itself one Christmas when this same boy prayed: "Thank you for this happy day. Thank you for my desk and thank you for my 'Book of Johns' and thank you for my ski stick and thank you for my shoe skates and thank you for my stockings and thank you for this lovely day — and thank you for Christmas!"

The following year when the third

brother had his fourth birthday, two friends in a distant city telegraphed some money for him to use to buy his own birthday presents. He was taken to the best toyshop within reach, and, after many suggestions from his big brothers (and a few from his mother), he chose a toy steam shovel, a small auto truck to supplement it, and a tiny horse and farm wagon.

That night when he said his prayer he seemed to feel that he wanted to include the donors of his birthday gifts; for he said, "Dear God, bless mother and daddy and everybody I love; and thank you, Dr. W—, for my nice steam shovel, and thank you, Aunt K—, for my automobile and for my horse and wagon. Amen."

The oldest boy, however, who was then almost six, thought back beyond the donors to the "Giver of all good." This was his prayer after his little brother's birthday party: "Thank you for this happy day. Thank you for all the friends who thought to send Billy such lovely birthday presents, and thank you for

making all the things that they were made of. Help everybody to have a happy day tomorrow."

When this boy had had his own fourth birthday, it was just at the time when every picture supplement of the New York papers was filled with portrayals of the condition of the starving children of Russia. The drive for their relief was on, and, as his birthday approached, he was given the choice of having something for himself or sending to the Russian Relief Fund as much money as would have been spent for his own birthday present. He chose to help the Russian children and took the letter to the post office and mailed it himself so that it would reach the central office of the Relief Fund on his birthday. How proud he was of the receipt when it came — addressed to him! Upon several occasions after that he referred to the Russian children and a number of times spoke of them in his prayers.

When his sixth birthday came he was again given a choice of having something

just for himself or of asking in some of his friends, with whom he could share his birthday presents. He chose to ask in his friends; and there was just as much of a present for each of the children at the table as there was for him. That night this was his birthday prayer: "Thank you for this happy day. Thank you for the fun of sharing with all my friends — and help everybody in the world to have as happy a birthday as I have had today."

Shortly after we had gone away on our summer vacation, this same boy prayed one night, "Thank you for my kind, kind daddy, and thank you for my kind, kind mother. Help mother and daddy to have happy times, and help us to think of things that will help them to have happy times."

It was very soon after this that the boys' father was called to Ohio by the death of his father. All the time he was gone the boys kept trying to plan things that they could do when daddy returned to show him how much they cared. They

decided that one way they could show their love was for each of them to earn the money to buy him a birthday present; for his birthday was to come just the week after his return. The day after the boys had gone to the store to pick out their presents for him, they were talking over what they might possibly buy for themselves with the money they had left over. That same evening, as the eight-year-old helped me put the car into the garage, we stood a moment out under the stars watching the lights twinkle on the ships in the distant harbor. After a few quiet moments, he said, "I think instead of getting anything for myself I will get another present for daddy to give him as soon as he gets back — just to show him how much I love him."

That night he prayed, "Help daddy to get home safely. Help me to be a good boy all the time so that I may be worthy to bear granddaddy's name. Help daddy to have a happy birthday, and help Uncle Tony to have a good time when he comes to visit us."



At the close of our oldest boy's tenth birthday, a very quietly happy day when he had chosen to go to church with me in the morning and, as the Birthday Boy, had made the choice of the route we should take for a drive in the afternoon, he prayed, "Thank you for everything that you have ever given me. Thank you for this happy, happy birthday. Help everybody to know how much I appreciate the presents they gave me. Help me to improve in everything that I need to improve in. Amen."

While I have been arranging this record of past events, our second boy has had his seventh birthday. He had been counting the days ever since the beginning of January, and had once or twice mentioned special friends whom he wanted to invite to his party. These were all children to whom birthday parties were no particular treat, because they attended so many. Consequently, early in the week before his birthday, I asked him whether he would rather ask a few friends to come here for supper on his

birthday, or have his celebration at school where all the children could enjoy it. Instantly he said, "Oh, I'd rather have it at school!" A few minutes later it occurred to him that there would be no giving of presents according to this arrangement; but he did not falter. "I'd rather share my birthday with the other children, anyway."

That night he said at the conclusion of his prayer, "Help me to have a happy birthday — I mean a generous one."

If ever a prayer was answered literally, that one surely was; for the days following were characterized by an unselfishness that made him fairly radiant. When the same friend referred to above again telegraphed money to use for his birthday, I asked him whether he would rather have something for himself or favors to give the children at the party at school. His instant reply was, "Oh, I'd rather have something I could share with the other children!"

He and his younger brother acted as hosts at the party, where (after the dis-

tribution of the valentines in the valentine box in their own room) the teacher let them go down to the playroom for the birthday celebration. As the children entered the room, the two boys stood on either side of the door and gave each child a red valentine hat. Then every one took a small chair and marched around the room while the teacher played the piano. After the children had all come in, they formed a circle about the table which had on it the cake with "Happy Birthday" on it in pink icing, and seven pink candles. Several of the Polish children who had never seen a birthday cake before seemed very solemnly impressed, and one little girl said to the teacher as she sat down beside her in the circle, "I never dreamed that anything nice like this was going to happen when we came down here!"

While mother and teacher were serving the ice-cream (which had a pink strawberry heart warming the center of each vanilla brick) the Birthday Boy and Little Brother passed first the gay nap-

kins, then the plates of ice-cream and cake. After every one had finished with this, John gave each child a red heart-shaped box filled with the kind of candy hearts that Raggedy Ann specialized in.

When it was time for the children to go — evidently wishing to make the party as complete a success as possible for every one — John stood up and said, "You may each spank me seven times as you go out, if you want to."

On the way home his big brother, who had been summoned from the third grade for the celebration, said, "Well, I think that was the loveliest birthday party I ever saw."

In response to his big brother's comment, the Birthday Boy quietly remarked, "The part I liked best about it was sharing."

When we reached home the little Polish girl who sometimes comes in to help with the baby was here; and, after he had shown his father the part of the cake with the "Happy Birthday" on it, which he

had wanted to bring home primarily to show daddy, John decided to send it home by Stella for her family to enjoy. He was also exhibiting the box of heart bonbons which his teacher had given him, when he suddenly murmured, "Let me see — they have twelve in their family," and began counting pieces of candy into the box in which the cake was being packed. Having missed his first remark, his father inquired, "What are you doing, John?"

"Well," said John, "they've got such a big family it will take a lot of candy to go 'round!"

The birthday morning dawned clear and bright, for the party at school occurred the day before his very own day, which comes between Lincoln's and St. Valentine's. His mother who had been ill a little time before, ate breakfast with the family that morning for the first time in a month, and while they were all at the table his father read John Martin's very beautiful birthday prayer which begins:

“Dear God, of all the many days  
That I have lived to see,  
My birthday is the one of all  
That most belongs to me.  
This day is mine because your love  
Gives me a Life to live.  
I thank you, God, with all my Heart  
For this dear Day you give.”

The schedule for the morning included the regular Saturday morning class in wood-working which our boys are privileged to attend once a week at a very wonderful school for handicapped children, which is situated in our community. The boys knew that a nurse who had been in our home recently was caring for the victims of the measles epidemic in that school, so the Birthday Boy decided that he would like to take some more of his “sharable” birthday presents to the eleven measles patients there.

It so happened that the day after John had decided to have his party at school, a friend called up to invite the boys to a valentine party for her little girl on John’s own birthday afternoon; and she was very much impressed later by the

fact that he did not divulge the information that it was his birthday until just as he was bidding her good-bye after the party and thanking her for his happy time.

Even anticipation of a valentine party, however, was not sufficient to obliterate John's keen desire to exhibit his most precious birthday surprise — a new tan sweater, presented to him by the West Indian helper in our home. Consequently an hour of skating on a neighboring pond was arranged before time to start to the party. After making the change from skating to party attire, off they trudged to the scene of the valentine festivities to return after supper, tired and sleepy but radiantly happy.

It happened that the Birthday Boy was ready for bed first, and when I came into the nursery I found him sitting at his desk writing with the pad and pencil which the little Polish girl had brought him for a birthday present. When I asked what he was doing he said he was writing a letter to the Fairy Joy. I no-

ticed a picture in the middle of the page; this, he said, was the table at the party. This was the letter: "Dear Fairy Joy: We had such a lovely party — I wish you had been there. I have had such a happy day! I wish when other little boys have their birthdays they could always be as happy as mine has been."

After his two brothers were in bed, too, the day ended with the story of Johnny Jones' birthday party from *All About Johnny Jones*, which closes with these words: "Mother is thankful that Johnny Jones is her little boy, and she is glad that he had such a happy birthday."

At the end of his prayer that night John said: "Help all our days to be as happy as these two days have been."

After I kissed him good night, I said, "It has been a happy birthday, hasn't it, dear? What was the very happiest part of it all?"

With a quiet, happy smile, he replied, "Sharing."



V

*Prayers Revealing an Interest  
in Animals*



## V

**A** CHILD'S interest in birthdays does not always center around those of the immediate family alone but includes a profound concern for the little calf in the neighbor's barn, for the kittens or puppies belonging to some friend, or, as it happened in our own particular case, in the arrival of baby rabbits. Our boys were presented with a pair of black and white rabbits (Jack and Jill) immediately after our arrival in a new community, and they were a joy until we confronted the problem of what should become of them when we left for our vacation. The boys were overjoyed when a neighbor's children offered to take care of them while we were gone. After the rabbit-hutch had been moved, and just a day or two before we were to leave town, Jill's babies arrived. Early in the morning the father of the boys who had adopted the rabbits temporarily had heard dogs in the yard and had gone out to drive them away. Our boys were greatly impressed by the kindness and thought-

fulness shown their pets by these neighbors throughout the day; and that night the boy to whom the rabbits belonged prayed, "Thank you for all the kind people who helped to take care of Jill today and went out and drove the dogs away; and help everybody to be kind to them while I am gone."

From the time this particular boy was four years old his prayers have evidenced a deep interest in every form of life. One night recently he prayed, "Thank you for everything that you have given us — for mothers and fathers and everything that you have made; for stars and birds and flowers and trees and squirrels and every living creature — fish and birds and everything."

Another night not long ago: "Thank you for every lovely thing in the world — for every flower and every tree and every blade of grass and every bird and every animal and for every kind of beast and every fish and everything in the world."

Some of his earlier prayers were:

"Thank you for the birds."

"Thank you for our nice pollywogs."

"Bless all the animals and birds and children and little babies."

"Dear God, bless mother and daddy and grand-daddy and all the animals and all the birds; they are my friends. Bless all my friends and everything that I love — and all the fishes and trees."

"Bless all the animals and birds and all flying creatures."

"Bless all the animals — 'cause I love everything that flies and everything that crawls and all of them."

"Please bless all the animals and birds, and everything that builds nests in trees."

The next night he widened his interests thus: "Bless everybody that I truly love, everybody that I love very much, and everybody that I love very, very much, and bless all the animals and all the birds and everything that can fly. Bless the ones that make their nests in the trees, and bless all the animals that make their nests in the ground, and those that

live in stables — and bless everybody and everything.”

“Those that live in stables” were most often seen attached to heavy drays or trucks, while we were living in the city. During this period the boys’ interest in horses was fostered chiefly by frequent visits to a near-by blacksmith shop, where they took great delight in watching the heavy drayhorses being shod, and also by observing the trucks as they were being loaded and unloaded at a warehouse across the street from us. Especially in winter when the horses had great difficulty in keeping their footing, the boys became greatly concerned about the horses that were doing heavy trucking. During an illness which confined the boys to the nursery, they spent a great deal of time observing the struggles of the truckmen in their endeavor to back their horses to the platform of this warehouse. One evening the oldest boy prayed, “Dear God, please help the men not to lose their tempers when it is slippery, so that they won’t whip their horses so hard.”

This compassion for animals that are being abused is frequently shown by children. One of the boys came to me one day greatly distressed because he had seen a boy step on a caterpillar purposely. "Why, Mother," he said, "I don't believe that Bobbie *knew* that that caterpillar would be a butterfly some day!"

This same concern is likely also to extend to all animals that have been injured or killed. One night — apropos of nothing at all — one of the boys prayed, "Bless all the kitty-cats that got killed during the war."

However, remembering that —

"He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small,"

we feel that any true significance attaching to their prayers is to be found in the boys' attitudes toward birds and animals and their actions in certain concrete situations — such as suggesting that the Christmas tree be taken outdoors to make a New Year's tree for the birds and squirrels by placing pieces of apple and suet and nuts upon it, or desiring to get a bone

and some water for a stray puppy which happened into the yard, or wanting to care tenderly for any animal which has met with misfortune. Even when all the boys were in bed with the measles one of them prayed, "Help mother to remember to put out some food for the birds."

This past summer the friend who, I believe, meant more to the children than any of the boys we met while we were away was a beautiful collie dog, Teddy, who used to pay us occasional visits of several days' duration. They were on the point of adopting him (for he wore no collar) when they learned that he belonged to a messenger boy on the island where we were spending our vacation. However, just as regularly as we would take him back would he return to our house on the cliffs to romp and play with our boys. I am very sure that one of their deepest regrets as our boat pulled out on the morning of our departure was that they were leaving this new-found friend behind. Almost every night since our return home the eight-year-old has



added at the end of his prayer, "And bless *Teddy*."

Another time when a stray dog had followed us home from a walk the six-year-old prayed, "Help the dog to find his way home all right."

One day when our boys came home from Sunday school they found a cat lying dead near the barn. They thought at first that it was their own pet, but they buried him without feeling absolutely sure about it. At lunch one of the boys said, "I hope it *is* our cat, for then *we* will be the ones to feel badly; but if it belongs to somebody else, think how sad they will feel when their cat does not come home!" A few hours later our own cat returned, so our sadness was for the owners of the other cat.

The experience which seemed to affect our oldest boy most deeply was finding a chipmunk that had been struck and killed by an automobile. When he saw it lying by the roadside he immediately wanted to bury it. He carried it carefully all the way; and, as it was almost dark when we

reached home, he filled a box with oak leaves and laid the chipmunk in it very tenderly, then covered it over with sassafras leaves and left it until morning; for he was eager to find a mossy place in which to bury it. While I was putting his two younger brothers to bed, I could hear him outside singing. The only snatches of his song that I could catch were:

"I love the stars better than anything.  
Dear stars, you are like little tots  
Playing around the moon."

Later when he came inside this was his prayer: "Dear God, bless all my family and help daddy to get home safe. Bless the little chipmunk. Dear God, it makes me feel so sad when I think of that chipmunk getting killed that I just feel like crying.

"Thank you, dear God, for the lovely sky that you have made. I just love you, dear God, for making everything so beautiful. Please help me to be a good boy tomorrow. Amen."

The boys always feel a great tender-

ness for animals or birds that have met with accidents. One afternoon while walking with some friends in a public park they saw an automobile run over a blue jay that was feeding in the street. When they reached the bird it was still alive, and they brought it home in the hope of reviving it. However, the poor little creature died in the street-car on the way home, so it was buried under the apple tree at sunset.

Another day one of the boys brought in a pigeon which he had found lying at the foot of the silo adjoining our neighbor's barn. He gave the bird water and laid it tenderly on a pillow in a screened-in porch; but, as it lived only about an hour, we thought that the bird's neck had probably been broken as it flew, or was blown, against the roof of the silo. When the boys buried this lovely grey dove they felt that "The Friendly Beasts" was the appropriate thing to sing over its grave, since it had spent its whole life in and around the barnyard and had been friendly with all the animals.

Only today when our five-year-old came in for luncheon he said, "I found a sparrow lying under the apple tree, Mother. I think a cat must have killed it. So I buried it and put flowers over it."

The happiest experience which the boys have had with any stray bird was with a flicker which had in some way become separated from the home nest before he was mature enough to be quite safe from prowling cats. A Polish gardener in the neighborhood had found him and made a cage for him; then presented him to our boys. They watched him intently for several hours and gave him water and food. Then they began to feel that he might ultimately get pretty lonely in there all by himself. Finally they decided that he must have come from the flicker's nest which they had noticed in a big apple tree just over the back fence. The nest was much too high for any of them to reach, but the biggest boy felt that if he put the bird into the very highest crotch in the tree which he could

reach, the bird might be able to find his way up to the nest — or that his mother might discover him there and help him find his way home.

One day when this boy was four he had seen a young bird struggling to fly, and had had to leave it after a vain effort to find its nest. That evening he prayed, "Dear God, help the little bird to find its way home to its nest. And bless all the birds and flowers and trees."

One summer after some friends who had been visiting us had started on an automobile trip, John would add every night to his prayer for their safety something like this:

"Bless everybody in the world and help them to get safely to the place where they are going.

"Help all the animals to get safely wherever they're going and take care of all the little creatures.

"And take care of the birds when they go on long journeys."

When his father asked him what he meant by "all the little creatures," he

said, "Oh, the beetles and things like that."

Another time, in the early spring, John voiced another prayer which was closely associated with the welfare of the "little creatures": "Bless everything in the whole wide world and help the trees to grow and help the grass to grow and help everybody to remember not to step on the fresh little new grass when it is just new born."

It was that same summer that John prayed one night:

"God bless everybody when they are going anywhere and help them to get safely wherever they are going.

"God bless all the animals—all the lions and every kind of beast and take care of all the animals whenever they move their houses. And take care of the birds whenever they move their nests, and God bless all the birds and take care of them whenever they go on long trips.

"And God bless the cats and don't let them chase the little birds.

"And God tell the dogs in their hearts

not to chase the cats any more and make them run so fast."

One year at Christmas time a friend presented the boys with a beautiful canary which they called Noël. The next summer they took it to the country with them, and it was the delight of the entire family. Then one morning, shortly after our return from our vacation, a cat got into the house. He must have leaped upon the cage and frightened the poor bird to death, for it apparently had not been touched, but was just lying lifeless in the bottom of the cage when we found it.

The oldest boy was almost overcome with grief; but planning to bury his pet under the bird-bath in the backyard seemed to give him an outlet for his emotion, and therefore to ease it. After the boys had placed the tin box containing Noël's tiny body under the center of the concrete pedestal of the bird-bath, they sang the arrangement of "Taps" which they often sing at night before going to sleep:

"Day is done,  
Gone the sun,  
From the hills, from the fields, from the  
sky;  
All is well,  
Sweetly sleep,  
God is nigh!"

That night one of the boys prayed,  
"Thank you, God, for Noël and his  
cheerful singing. Help me always to try  
to make other people happy, the way he  
did."



## VI

### *Prayers of Aspiration*



## VI

**I**N ONE of the chapters in *The New Republic's* recently published symposium on present day parenthood, John Lovejoy Elliott says, "The only possible way for parents or teachers to make young people believe that the spiritual power in the world lives, is to live it." And the only way to make them realize that human life is capable of great ideals is to make them aware of the aspirations and ideals of as many people as possible. The way children grasp the significance of the lives and events which they hear discussed was impressed upon us recently when a well-known Canadian preacher was a guest in our home for a short time. After the Sunday evening meal, which had been served early so that the children might share it with us, he was telling us the story of an Englishman whose life has been unique in the extraordinary degree to which he has imposed upon himself all the implications of the Christian gospel, and whose influence in recent British history has been remarkable.

About two weeks after the departure of our guest, our eight-year-old said one night, "Mother, I think George Davies is more like Jesus than any one else I ever heard about."

Not only the stories which children hear in conversation, but also those that are read to them, have a great effect upon their aspirations. Shortly after I had been reading aloud Rufus Jones' *The Boy Jesus and His Companions*, our oldest boy, then only six, prayed, "Thank you for putting Jesus on the world to help us know what is right to do."

I think this boy's first real prayer of aspiration was voiced after a church-school Christmas party. He had had the happiest time which life had yet afforded him. When he went to bed at an extremely late hour for him, he prayed, "Dear God, bless mother and daddy and grand-daddy and everybody in the world — and I want to be like Jesus now while I'm a little boy."

One other Christmas night he prayed, "Thank you for this happy Christmas

Day. Help us to be kind and thoughtful of each other."

One morning shortly after that, he was singing a song while he was dressing. The main theme of it, developed with many variations, was:

"I love Jesus;  
He taught people to be kind."

On another occasion I overheard his younger brother singing:

"We all believe in Jesus Christ;  
We are his friends;  
We help him to be  
Kind to everybody."

## I. KINDNESS

A recognition of kindness as a virtue to be desired is often expressed in the boys' prayers. One night after an older boy had spent the afternoon with them and had impressed them by his thoughtfulness of the younger children, the oldest boy prayed, "Help me to be kind like Durbin; and help me always to do the things you want me to do."

By the time the second boy was six years old, he seemed to recognize that a

kindly attitude toward others was conducive of greater happiness in the nursery. Here were some of his prayers during his sixth year :

“Dear heavenly Father, help me to be a good boy tomorrow and every day, and help me to be kind.”

“Dear God, bless mother and daddy and grand-daddy and everybody I love, and help me to be kind and good.”

“Help us to be good boys and never fight each other any more, but live cheerfully together.”

“Help us not to have any more fusses.”

“Help us never to fight any more and help every one never to fight any more ever again; and help everybody in the whole world to have a happy day tomorrow.”

The oldest boy, too, often voiced similar aspirations:

“Help me not to push or shove or do any of the things I know you would not want me to do — nor anything that I know mother and daddy wouldn’t want me to do.”

"Help me not to hit or do anything to make any one cry tomorrow."

"Help me not to hit or do anything unkind tomorrow. Help me to do everything I ought to do. Thank you for this happy day and help all the days to be happy days."

The four-year-old caught the spirit, too, and expressed it perhaps more adequately than either of his brothers:

"Help us to be good boys and never have fights any more. Help us always to have good food that will make us grow, and help us always to be more love-full."

## II. HELPFULNESS

A recognition of the fact that the helpful times are the happy times appeared in a prayer of our seven-year-old. At the end of a week when he had been making a very special effort to be of service while the helper in our home was ill, he prayed, "Dear God, thank you for helping me to be helpful these last few days. Help me to be as good all the time as I have been the last four days."

From the time this boy was seven a desire for the spirit of helpfulness has been a constantly reiterated theme in his prayers.

"Bless everybody in the world and help me to do what I know I ought to do; and help me to help other people whenever I can."

"Help me to think before I do things, and help me always to help anybody I can."

"Help me to do all I can to help everybody in the world."

One time when his father and I were going away for a brief visit, he prayed, "Help me to do everything I ought to do while mother and daddy are gone; and help me to help in every way I can."

When I was ill one winter the second boy prayed, "Help mother to get better and help us to mind mother and do all that we can to help make her get better."

At this same time the oldest boy prayed, "Help me to do the right thing and have a happy day tomorrow. Bless



everybody in the world and help everybody to do what is right and have a happy day tomorrow, and help me to help everybody I can. Help mother to get better, and help me to do everything I can to help her get better." In his attempt to help God answer this prayer, the next night — without a suggestion from any one — he washed, dried and carefully put away all the supper dishes.

Another night he prayed, "Thank you for everything that you have given us — for mothers and fathers and everything that you have made. Help me not to wake daddy up in the mornings but let him get his rest, because he is so good to me. Help me to do what mother asks me to, because she is so dear to me; and help me not to hit my brothers. Help me to do the things I ought to do, so that every one will like me."

### III. COURTESY

Very often a desire to do the right thing primarily for the sake of making the people about them happy appears in

the children's prayers. Thus, a morning prayer of our eight-year-old:

"Please help me, God, to do the things I ought to do today. Help me to do things that will please mother and daddy, and John and Billy — and You."

Other prayers of this same nature were:

"Help me to be a good boy all the time, and help me always to do the things that mother and daddy would want me to do."

"Help me always to be helpful to anybody I can. Help me — whenever I am invited out to dinner or anything — to do the things that mother and daddy would want me to do."

"Help me to think of nice things to do for people."

"Help me always to be kind to everybody. Help me to be helpful and courteous."

"Help everybody to have a happy day tomorrow, and help people to think about doing things to make each other happy."

"Help me to be a good boy tomorrow and help us to make tomorrow the very

happiest day that we have ever had.”

“Thank you for our happy day. Help me to be a very kind boy tomorrow and help all the other boys and girls to be nice, so that they may not make their mothers unhappy. Help us to have another happy day tomorrow.”

When he was only four he prayed one night, “Bless my dear mother. I love her so much. Help me to make her happy the way angels make their mothers happy.”

This habit of making his own aspirations for himself general appeared another night in his prayers: “Thank you for all our happy times. Help everybody to be kind and good, and help us to be good and kind to everybody.”

And another night: “Help everybody to do the things they know they ought to do.”

#### IV. GENEROSITY

Generosity is another virtue which children recognize as admirable, even though they often fail to emulate it. One

night the eight-year-old prayed, "Help me not to be selfish."

His four-year-old brother, however, was more explicit in expressing his desires: "Help me to be a good boy and never cry when the doctor comes — and take the medicine he gives me. Help me always to share and keep the little piece myself and give the big piece to my brothers."

And another time this same boy prayed, "Help me always to be a good boy and share my candy with other people and give them the big piece and keep the little piece myself." Then he added to me, "I did that once with John!"

One winter after we had been reading Jay Stocking's story about "Thank You Much and Gim Me More," the seven-year-old prayed, "Dear God, help me to be a good boy and help everybody in the world to be good. Help us to share and not say, 'Gimme more'; and help us not to say any of the bad words any more."

This last phrase referred to a general disturbance of the peace of the household

which had been caused by the introduction of a number of rather distressing street phrases which the boys had picked up. It was the five-year-old who prayed one night, "Help us to have happy days every day and not swear any more."

## V. PENITENCE

A great many of the stories which are told or read to children have an obvious influence upon their desires and aspirations. One night after I had finished reading a number of stories to the boys, our second son prayed, "Help us to be good boys tomorrow and never fight any more. And thank you for all the wonderful stories that mother reads."

Another night, after the oldest boy had heard "How Cedric Became a Knight" told as the children's story in church, he prayed, "Help me always, always to do the things I ought to do, 'cause every day I seem to do something I ought not to do; and help me to do things quickly when mother and daddy speak to me."

One day when he was sitting cross-legged on a table telling stories to his little brothers, I caught this much of one of them: "Once upon a time God told all the children that they should be good and do the things their mothers asked them to do."

This consciousness that "the good that I would, that I do not; and the wrong that I would not, that I do," dawns early upon a child. One night, after a not altogether successful day, he prayed, "Dear God, help me to be a gooder boy tomorrow morning. Dear God, I want you to remember sometimes when I start to do something bad, I want you to say, 'No, no,' and then I will be good."

A realization of the possibility of making restitution for wrong-doing also evidenced itself one evening when this same boy, after telling me how very badly he felt about doing something which he recognized as wrong, said, "Well, I am certainly going to try to think of something good to do tomorrow to make up for it." Another time, after a rather un-

satisfactory day, he prayed, "Help the real *me* to come back tomorrow."

Even a three-year-old will often recall a wrong act and weave into his prayer an expression of his desire to improve upon the mistakes of the day. One evening after we had returned from a visit with a friend who had a little girl a few months younger than our third son, this boy prayed, "Help Billy to be a good boy and not take little Jean's book again." Evidently there had been some trouble between them of which neither her mother nor I had been conscious.

Several years ago — when the oldest boy was only five — he knelt beside his chair one morning and prayed, "Dear God, help me to be a good boy today. Help me to take good care of my little brothers and of mother. Help me to be kind and thoughtful."

Later in the day when he was failing to be "kind and thoughtful," I said, "Didn't you ask God to help you to be a good boy today? Do you think he can do it unless you are willing to help?"

What do you think you had better do about it?"

He thought a moment, then replied, "I think I had better do the best I can myself without waiting for God to do it at all."

Another day, when there had been a marked spirit of dissension in the nursery, he suddenly jumped up from the table where he was sitting and exclaimed, "We aren't doing any good for God — let's start cleaning up!" Whereupon he led his two younger brothers in an assault upon the disorder in the nursery, until the room was set to rights.

## VI. RIGHTEOUSNESS

The beginning of a sense of right for right's sake seemed to come to our oldest boy at the time of the death of his grandfather. He was deeply impressed with the fact that, as his namesake, he was the one to carry on — not only his name, but also the ideals for which he had stood. Night after night he prayed, "Help me always to do what is right. Help me al-



ways to be worthy of granddaddy's name."

Another night he prayed, "Help me to have a happy day tomorrow and help me to do the right thing. Help me to do what you want me to do. Help me to help mother and daddy and everybody I can and help everybody in the world to do the right thing."

The winter (previously referred to) when I was ill, after a day when he had not been as thoughtful and helpful as he might have been, he prayed, "Help me always to stop and think before I do things and help me always to do what I ought to do. Help me always to do what is kind and true and help me always to tell the truth. Help me to do the things that are really helpful while mother is in bed. Help her to get better soon."

Another night he prayed, "Help me always to tell the truth and help me always to act the truth."

An instance of his really attempting to do this occurred this same winter, shortly after the second boy had his seventh

birthday. The oldest boy had been given a quarter to pay the carfare for himself and his brothers, as they started out to go to a class which they attended every Saturday morning. The carfare was seven cents each way, so all winter — up to that time — twenty-five cents had covered the round trip, inasmuch as the oldest boy had been the only one paying carfare.

The boys were a little late coming home that morning, and then came on foot instead of on the car. When they arrived I heard this conversation downstairs:

“Why didn’t you ride home?”

“We didn’t have enough money.”

“Why, I gave you a quarter!”

“I know, but that only paid our fare up.”

“How did that happen?”

“I told the conductor that John was seven now; so it cost us fourteen cents to go up and that left us only eleven cents to pay our carfare home — so we walked.”

Of course I made it very clear to him how greatly pleased I was because he had preferred to walk home rather than deceive the conductor about John's age.

As our oldest boy approached nine, he occasionally asked for help in some specific task of the following day, such as, "Help me to get a hundred in my number work tomorrow," or "Help me to get a hundred in spelling tomorrow." More and more, however, his prayer assumed a definite pattern and the theme — sometimes varied in the phrasing but almost always the same in aspiration — was usually something like this:

"Help me always to do what is right; may everybody always do the right thing; and let me help them.

"Help me always to do the right thing and help me always to say the right thing.

"Help me not to hit or do anything wrong tomorrow.

"Help me never to do anything wrong and help me always to do what is right.

"Help me to do what is right forevermore. Amen."



## VII

### *Social Prayers*



## VII

EVERY one is ready to admit that the cultivation of wide sympathies is an end to be sought in the life of every child. In fact, one of our modern educators has described education as "the development of a sympathetic imagination." Just how early these sympathies may arise and how wide may be their range has been brought to my attention very strikingly by the purely spontaneous prayers which my small boys have voiced in the past five years. Although I find their interests exceedingly varied, I think they fall naturally under four main groupings: (1) prayers for the sick; (2) for the poor, the unfortunate and those in great danger; (3) for those who labor for our comforts; and (4) for a warless world.

### I. PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

Although our modern writers are beginning to question just how early in their lives children ought to learn of the unhappiness, suffering and injustice in the world around them, very few chil-

dren live many years without becoming conscious of the fact of illness, either in their own lives, or at least in their own homes. They soon come to regard the doctor who is called in at these times of emergency as one of the greatest friends of the household. Before our oldest boy was four he said one day, "I want to be a doctor so that I can help sick people get well and so I can help them stay well." And one night he prayed, "Bless all the people who are in hospitals and all the people who are in bed, and help them to get well; and help all the people who are well not to get sick."

The first illness of any importance to affect our boys was their epidemic of measles. Perhaps it was because there were three of them in bed at one time that it seemed almost as though the nursery had become a hospital; at any rate, their thoughts went out to others who were sick. One night the five-year-old prayed:

"Dear God, help me to be very good and helpful to everybody. Be with everybody that is sick in the hospitals and with



us at home — and help mother to put out some food for the birds.”

Another night he prayed, “Help everybody in the hospitals to get well.”

Possibly the fact that one of their very dearest friends, who came often to the house, was in training in one of the big city hospitals helped to center their interest there. Almost every time she came they would have some picture they had drawn, or some toy they wanted her to take to the children in the children’s ward. One night after she had spent the afternoon with us the oldest boy prayed, “Bless Dorothy and bless every one in Dorothy’s hospital.” And another night, “Bless all the children in Dorothy’s hospital and help them to get well; and bless everybody in the world.” Still another night he prayed, “Help me to be able to help people in hospitals.” And another time, “Dear God, thank you for grass and flowers and for mother and father and for hospitals to go to when you are sick, and thank you for nurses and doctors.”

The night before a friend was to be

operated on for appendicitis the eight-year-old prayed, "Help the doctors and nurses not to make any mistakes."

When he was only four the oldest boy prayed, "Dear God, help me to be a better boy tomorrow so we can have a happier day. Help the war to stop. Help all the people in the hospital to get well so they can run around and see the stars and hear the birds and have a happy time."

Whenever any member of the family was sick, this always seemed to take the children's sympathies out to other sufferers beyond the limits of their own home. During his grandfather's illness the oldest boy prayed, "Dear God, bless mother and daddy and granddaddy and help him to get better so he will not suffer so much, and be with all the people who are suffering very much and help them to get better. And bless Patsy and help his foot to get all well." (Patsy was a little crippled boy who lived in the neighborhood.)

Perhaps it was the memory of the carefully tended plants in the windows of the tenement across the street from the house

in which we lived until the oldest boy was five that inspired this prayer one summer when we were in the country: "Help our garden to grow and help everybody's garden to grow; and help the things in pots in people's windows to grow, too, so that they can see them when they are sick."

## II. FOR THE POOR, THE UNFORTUNATE, AND THOSE IN GREAT DANGER

It may be that the thought of one tree in that block, which was the only tree visible from the street within a radius of four or five blocks, had its influence upon this prayer: "Dear God, thank you for every, every, everything that you have made; and bless mother and daddy and granddaddy; and bless the trees and help them to grow so that everybody can see them — especially for the poor people who don't have gardens like other people."

The fact that many, many people did not seem to have a fair chance in the world impressed itself upon him very

early. One night before he was four he asked, "Mother, why did God make poor people?" Another night he asked why everybody didn't have a home. One day as he climbed into bed for his afternoon nap, he said, "Dear God, take care of everybody that hasn't any home."

About a year later he prayed one night, "Dear God, bless mother and daddy and granddaddy and everybody in the world. Be in all the places where there aren't any houses or rooms and where people are sick or poor—or where they aren't poor."

Another night after praying for the family he added, "Bless everybody in the world—especially all the people who are suffering or poor."

One day while we were walking through one of the crowded sections of the district where we lived until he was six, he said, "Why doesn't the government give all the poor people more money?"

In this same vein he prayed, one night, "Please make this a happy world some-

time, so that all the poor people will have enough money."

Another night not long afterward he prayed, "Help all the poor people to be better and have more money, and help the government to think more about the poor people."

The thought of inequalities he had seen in the big city stayed with him long after we left New York. The winter he was eight he came to me one afternoon while I was sitting at my desk and said, "Mother, will you write down this poem for me?"

### THE POOR

Have thou ever thought of the poor —

How poor they are?

Have thou ever thought of the rich —

How rich they are —

How many friends they have?

How would you like to be poor

And have not so many clothes to wear  
as you do?

And so little to eat!

How would you like to be rich

And have a big house

And a lot to eat?

How would you like to be poor?

When we have been in the country during the summer his thought has often gone back to the people in the cities. One very hot night while I was saying good night to him after he was all stowed away on his sleeping porch he said, "There are a good many people who haven't as comfortable places as this to sleep."

One summer when we were vacationing among the Vermont hills he prayed: "Thank you for giving us the time to enjoy everything here in the mountains. Be with all the people who cannot get out and see all these beautiful things; and help the world sometime to be so that every one will have a chance to see all the beautiful things in the world."

Another night after a ride at sunset he prayed, "Thank you for this happy day. Help tomorrow to be the happiest day we ever had. Help us to make this a better world. Help us to make this the best world that any world can be, so that some people will not have to live in bad houses and not have nice warm baths as we have. Help everybody to do what

you want them to do, and help people not to kill each other any more nor steal any more."

This problem of evil in people's lives he had touched upon in his evening prayer several years before, when he prayed one night when he was only five, "Dear heavenly Father, please be with all the men and women — with all the people who are bad and help them to be good."

The boys' first contact with society's effort to deal with offenders occurred one evening shortly after we had moved from the city into a small New England town. They were watching a glorious sunset from an upstairs window of the new house, when suddenly one of the boys became conscious of a large, solid-looking building silhouetted against the crimson sky. It was the first time that I had realized the county jail was only a block away. Below the window our syringa bush was in blossom; and, after we had talked over together what this building meant, the boys decided that they would

like to take as many of those blossoms as they could carry over to the people behind those bars the next day. That night the oldest boy prayed, "Dear God, help me to be a good boy every day. Help all the people to get out of jail and want to be good. And help the government to give them one more chance."

This past summer the boys were greatly concerned about a blind man whom they had seen feeling his way along the street with his cane. One night the eight-year-old prayed, "Help somebody always to be there to help the blind man across the street; and help him always to find his own house all right when he goes home."

Not only the unfortunate, but also those in great danger enlist a child's sympathies. At the time of the Smyrna fire the oldest boy prayed, "Bless all the people that came from the fire in Smyrna, and bless everybody in the world — but not war." Another night, "Help the little children to get enough food so they will not die."



After a very dear friend who had been "helping the little children from Smyrna" had been drowned in the Sea of Galilee, he prayed, "Dear heavenly Father, be with all the people who are out in the little boats tonight, and don't let them sink." And another night, "Help the boats out at sea not to sink."

The week following a particularly stormy week in January when there had been so many brave rescues on the Atlantic he prayed, "Help all the sailors out at sea to get home safely, and help all the poor people to get along through this cold weather. Bless everybody in the world and help me to do what I know I ought to do, and help me to help other people whenever I can."

We were at the seashore when a very severe storm came up while the boys were getting ready for bed. While he was undressing, the oldest boy began to sing, "Eternal Father, strong to save."

In a moment his younger brother came walking into his room, saying, "Isn't it queer — I was just thinking of that song

when you started to sing it?" So together they sang their prayer:

"Eternal Father, strong to save,  
Whose arm doth bind the restless wave  
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep  
Its own appointed limits keep:  
O hear us when we cry to thee  
For those in peril on the sea!"

### III. FOR ALL WHO LABOR TO GIVE US OUR COMFORTS

A week ago in a vesper service which he was conducting, our eight-year-old gave thanks "for all the workers that make our homes comfortable." From the time he was three he has had an ever-widening consciousness of the vast number of helpers outside the home who are ministering daily to his welfare and comfort. Beginning with the iceman, he has mentioned in his prayers of thanksgiving already recorded, miners, electricians, carpenters, farmers, plumbers, men in factories, trainmen, boatmen, artists, grocery-men, firemen, policemen, blacksmiths, street-cleaners, and "all the men who make things — especially the things

we need most, our houses and our clothes." One night he prayed, "Bless all the workers." This interest in the toilers revealed itself in a song I heard him singing to himself one night after he had gone to bed:

#### A WORKMEN'S SONG

Here is a song of workmen,  
Here is a song of workmen,  
As we come down the street  
With our tools and hammers.

Have a workmen's song,  
Have a workmen's song,  
Have a workmen's song,  
As you go down the street.

Here we go home.  
"This is where I live — good-bye  
"I live in this next apartment."  
"The next house is where I live."

Here we go back to work again —  
Pound, pound, pound,  
Strike, strike, strike,  
Here goes a nail,  
Strike, strike, here it's in!

One night after the boys had been watching a very lovely sunset following a severe storm, the second boy prayed, "Thank you for the lovely sunset and

thank you for mothers and daddies, and thank you for houses and roofs, and thank you for the men who make houses."

One evening after the oldest boy had had a very happy experience with a policeman, who had found the case for his fishing-rod and had brought it to the house, he prayed, "Thank you for the kind men that there are in this world."

Another night he prayed, "Thank you for all the trees and flowers and animals, and thank you for all the people who make things for us—our clothes and everything; and bless all the people all over the world and help them to be better so there won't be war any more."

#### IV. FOR A WARLESS WORLD

When the oldest boy was only four, the fact of war entered his consciousness through the picture supplements that came into the house. He prayed one night, "Bless all the kitty cats that got killed in the war and bless all the people that got killed in the war. I know they are all with you, dear God, you are so good to us and send us the stars."

One day after he had seen a "No More War" poster in the back of an automobile in a Quaker community where we spent several summers, he said in his prayer, "Dear God, bless mother and daddy and everybody I said last night. Bless all the unborn children and don't let any of them die. I don't want anybody to stumble and fall down and I don't want anybody to get killed. I'm glad people are trying not to have any more war. Don't let any more people get killed in the war."

Another night that same summer he prayed, "Bless everybody I love. I love everybody but I don't like war and I don't like boats to sink, and I don't like armies."

One day when he was supposed to be taking his nap, he was making up a story, pretending to read it aloud to himself from a book he had in bed with him. As I passed his door I overheard what I presume must have been the end of the story:

"Then the king sent out all his soldiers. He sent more and more of his soldiers

until it was a great war — until it was the greatest war there ever was. Then God was discouraged that morning because he couldn't stop the war."

Some of this boy's prayers for a warless world the summer before he was six were:

"Help the soldiers not to fight any more, and help the kings to think better thoughts so there won't be any more war."

"Help this to be a happier world so that people can't buy any more guns."

"Take the badness out of people's hearts and help them to think better things."

"Help the kings to think better thoughts so that they may be more kind and friendly."

"Help the soldiers to stop fighting."

"Help people not to have any more wars. Help them not to think about such things."

"Help us to make this a happy world before another war comes."

"Dear God, please help this world here sometime to be as happy as it is now up in heaven."

At Christmas after his sixth birthday he went about with the children of the neighborhood singing carols, and this was his Christmas prayer:

"Thank you for the happy, happy time that I have had. Bless the miners and help the kings to think how bad it is to be a king and send all the soldiers out to fight. Bless everybody all over the world and help every one to have a happy Christmas."

During that winter he often sang to himself while he was going to sleep. One night not long before Christmas I stood outside his door and wrote this down as he sang it.

#### A SONG OF MARY

"I wonder, I wonder, I wonder,  
I wonder what my little boy will be,"  
Sang Mary when Jesus was a little baby,  
"He shall not be a soldier,  
He shall only be a man,  
That is all."

Now this is the song that Mary sang,  
"This Christmas night my baby is born.  
I name him Jesus —  
He shall be a man,  
He shall be strong."

Another night during this same winter I took down in the same manner this Song of Peace:

"O God, I hope that the world will be peaceful and that everybody will forget about guns and swords and spears and everything that they have now; for every time anybody shoots it hurts somebody. I hope that the soldiers will all stop being soldiers because they are always getting their arms and legs broken. I know that all the animals are peaceful together — why can't people be peaceful together on the earth?

"The world is lovely, too, for I know that everything looks pretty.

"I know that angels are peaceful, and birds and flowers are certainly peaceful."

Several observations of the friendly world had been made during the summer previous to this. One day while taking a walk he said, "Everything is friendly to us. The nut trees give food to the squirrels. The squirrels do not bite us because they are our friends."

One evening at sunset, noticing a laurel



bush and cedar tree near each other, he said, "See this bush and this little Christmas tree growing here together like friends." Then, with a broad sweep of his arms, he added, "See all the trees growing together, so friendly."

The next summer while we were on our vacation, living very primitively, he became deeply interested in the simple implements that were used by early peoples. One day he asked eagerly, "Has everything been discovered yet?" Following that he prayed several nights:

"Thank you for everything that you have made. Help people to think of new things — just as ever since the olden time people have been thinking of new things, help them to keep on thinking of new things."

"Thank you for all the animals and everything that you have made; and help people to keep on discovering new things — only not war and bombs. Help people not to do any damage but only the things that you want them to do."

The third boy, during the winter be-

fore his fifth birthday, became very much concerned about the revolution in China. He prayed one night, "Don't let there be any more war in China — because I don't like war." Then he added to me, "Mother, why doesn't God tell the soldiers in their hearts not to fight any more, so that they'll go home and stop shooting each other?"

Another night while he was undressing he said, "I don't see why people fight. I don't know how it happens to come into their minds to do it."

That same winter the oldest boy prayed one night, "Help everybody in the world to have a happy time tomorrow, and help the world not to have any more war. Help people to be kind to each other and help me to be kind to mother and help me to think of things that I can do for other people to make them happy."

Throughout his fourth and fifth years this oldest boy would often sing to himself while he was dressing. These are snatches of his songs, which I caught at various times:

"Jesus is my companion."

"Jesus said, 'I am the spirit of God.' "

"We can see Jesus' life, but we cannot see his spirit."

"Jesus said to his soldiers, 'Stop making guns so there will be no more war.' "

"Jesus said, 'No more war, no more war.' "



VIII

*Prayers of World  
Friendship*



## VIII

**I**N HIS illuminating interpretation of a boy's religion, *Finding the Trail of Life*, Rufus Jones has a chapter entitled, "The Ends of the Earth Come Home." As I read his stories of the various visiting Friends through whom, as he put it, "the ends of the earth came to our humble door," I began to go over in my mind the numerous parts of the world which had been made real to our boys because of the people they had met who had either just come from some distant land or were about to journey thither.

In the home of their very earliest recollections, almost all the people living about them had come either from Ireland or Italy, although one of their first friends was a dear old German woman past eighty who had come to this country on a sailing ship in the early days. The mother of one of their friends in Sunday school had come from Austria, and the woman who came to help us once a week had just come over from France as the wife of an American soldier. The

husband of another helper in our home came from Cuba, and her successor was from the West Indies.

Before the oldest boy was three, friends from Hawaii came to visit us, and the next winter he made the acquaintance of others of our friends from China, Japan, India and Turkey — missionaries home on furlough. Our boys met students who had come over from Russia, Greece and Switzerland; and on the first Armistice Day after the war, a Turk and an Armenian sat together at our table.

During all the years that we lived in New York, crossing the Staten Island ferry always seemed to bring us nearer to the far corners of the globe, as we counted the flags of many nations on the ships in the harbor.

When we left New York I was eager to prepare the boys for the community to which we were going, in which I knew that many Polish people were to be not far distant neighbors. I therefore took them to a shop where the work of Polish refugees was on sale and let them spend



an hour or more admiring the interesting handwork and the pictures portraying the life of the Polish peasant. Then each of them chose a toy which he wanted to buy—very clever wooden toys they were, made by Polish children not much older than themselves. This experience helped, I believe, to establish a basis of respect for the children with whom they associated in public school the next year, whose names happened to end in “wicz” or “ski.”

Another incident which occurred in New York bore fruit in the new community, where we lived within a block of the Jewish synagogue. We were in the subway one day on the way to an art gallery where the portrait of a friend with her two children was on exhibition. While we were speeding along underground, my four-year-old, who had been studying the features of our fellow passengers, leaned over to me with the question, “Mother, why do so many people we see here in New York have noses that are different from ours?” I explained

that this was merely a physical characteristic of the Hebrew people — a noble race to which Jesus himself belonged, as well as some of the greatest thinkers and writers since his day. Later, just as we were about to leave the art gallery, I noticed Rabbi Wise standing in the center of a group of friends, talking. Even at the risk of seeming to stare rudely, I called my boy's attention to him. I asked him to notice what a fine, strong face he had, and to watch the kind look in his eyes when he talked to his friends. "He is a Jew," I said, "one of their greatest rabbis. So whenever you hear any one speaking of Jews, you can always think of him."

It was four years later, in an entirely different setting, that one of the boys came in with his face alight as he said, "Mother, we've made friends with some Jewish boys and they're awfully nice. One of them has the same name as mine! John let them each have a turn riding in his automobile."

In this new community the boys had

an opportunity to make friends with a little boy from Mexico, and to share one of their rabbits with him to keep him from getting too lonesome until he went back home. Here people from England, Wales and Scotland have come into their lives, also from Albania and South America, and last year one of their friends sailed away for South Africa. Since her arrival she has put our oldest boy in touch with a child of his own age in Pretoria, with whom he has had an interesting exchange of letters; and a friend who is about to sail for Greece has promised to find him a Greek correspondent.

All of this has helped them to think of the world not so much as a vast globe whirling through space, but as the home of their friends. Therefore there is meaning in their words when they pray — as they do each night — “God bless everybody in the world.” One night the five-year-old prayed, “Bless everybody I love — I mean, bless everybody I know.” But a year later when he heard his little

brother say in his prayers, "God bless everybody I love," he said, "I don't think it is a good thing just to say, 'God bless everybody I love.' I think it's better to say, 'God bless everybody in the world.' " Another night this same boy prayed, "Bless everybody in the world. Bless every single person that is living."

One Easter night after one of the boys had prayed thus, his younger brother said, "I love everybody in the world." At this the oldest boy queried, "How can we have enough love to go around?" Then, as though trying to explain it to himself, he said, "Maybe if we love all our friends, then they will go on loving all their friends and they will go on loving other people — and that way there will be enough love to go around to everybody in the world."

This feeling of kinship with all men everywhere had dawned upon the oldest boy when he was four. One night he prayed, "Dear God, bless all the fairies. Bless all my people and bless every one who aren't my people. Bless every one

in the world, for they are really all my people. Bless all the birds — they are my friends, and bless all the animals.”

This universality of interest appeared in many of his prayers that year. Here are some of them:

“Dear God, bless all of my friends and bless everybody in every world — one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, fourteen, seventeen, eighteen — that many people! Amen.”

“Bless everybody in every world, in every country, and in every city. I love everybody. Bless all the poor people.”

“Bless everybody everywhere, and in every city; and bless every bird and every animal and every horse and every-every-everybody — one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight — every people in all the the world. Thank you for the birds and stars.”

“Bless everybody in all the world — and all the birds and animals — not anything left out! Amen.”

In the same strain he prayed one night,

"Bless all the animals and all the men and women and babies — no one missed."

Yet again: "Bless every single person in this world — and all the birds; and thank you for this nice, nice lovely world."

"Bless everybody all over the world. I don't know all their names, but bless them all."

One night after we had been reading Mrs. Mitchell's delightful story of the "Five Little Babies" in the *Here and Now Story Book*, he prayed, "Thank you for all the people that have different names. Bless the Indians and the Chinese and the Japanese and the Americans and all the people that have different colored babies."

With his widening knowledge, the names of different countries appeared more often in his prayers:

"Thank you for all our neighbors and take care of everybody in France and Egypt and everywhere tonight."

"Bless everybody in ships and all the people in China and the people who live

in Egypt and every one all over the world."

"Bless the Africans and the Indians and everybody all over the world. Help the boats at sea not to sink."

"Bless all my friends and every-every-everybody all over the world—the Chinese people and the African people and the people in France and in Egypt and in India and every-every-everywhere; and bless the kings and the soldiers and the miners. Thank you for our happy day and for everything which you have made; and help me to remember to be a good boy tomorrow."

One night after a Japanese friend of ours had been with us for tea, one of the boys became historically as well as geographically inclusive when he prayed, "Bless all the Japanese and all the Chinese and all the Indians and the Africans and the Puritans and cave-men and everybody in the world."

And the next night he added, "Bless everybody in the world and bless everybody in heaven."

Even before the boys had learned the Lord's Prayer one of them approximated its phraseology one night when he prayed, "Dear God, please help this world here sometime to be as happy as it is now up in heaven."

One night when the oldest boy was finishing his prayer he turned to me after he had said "Bless everybody in the world," with the question, "Mother, suppose there are people living on the stars — then we want God to bless them, too!" So we decided that we could say, "Bless every one in all God's universe."

Prayers of gratitude for the beauties of the earth usually mingle with supplications that the world may become an even better place to live in:

"Thank you for all the lovely things in the world and help all the people in the world to be happier."

"Help everybody in the world to be good."

"Help us to make this a better world. Help us to make this the best world that any world can be."



Of course it is very natural that the children of the world should find a place in the prayers of children. At the time of the Smyrna disaster, which came very close to us because it affected many of our friends, the oldest boy prayed, "Help the children from Smyrna to get enough food so that they won't die."

One night the third boy stopped in the middle of his prayer and said, "Are the Chinese children waking up now? Where are the children going to bed the way we are — in Italy?"

When we were reading the story, *Ah Fu, A Chinese River Boy*, our fourth son, three and a half, listened very intently during the part of the story that told how lonely Ah Fu was and how he longed for a playmate. I felt a little hand on my arm and I stopped reading. "I would like to play with him," he said.

That night when he went to bed the big round moon was looking in the nursery window, so we asked the moon to give our love to Ah Fu when it was time for him to go to bed in his boat-home,

just as the sun would be telling us that our waking-up time had come. The next morning while he was dressing he asked, "Is the moon shining in China now?"

There is a prayer which our children love, which is to be found in *Through the Gateway*, the first of the series of "Books of Goodwill."<sup>1</sup> "Father, bless all the little children who are now going to bed, and help all the little children who are playing in the sunshine while we sleep, to have a happy day."

The bibliography at the end of this same volume gives the best list of books I know of to help make all the children of the world real to other children. I find it helpful to keep on hand for use on rainy days or at times when the boys need to stay in bed, the various villages that can be obtained from the Milton Bradley Company. The Pictorial Geography Sheets<sup>2</sup> are also most helpful for children after they begin to read. One

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<sup>1</sup>Published by the National Council for Prevention of War, 532 Seventeenth St., N.W., Washington, D. C.

<sup>2</sup>Published by the National Geographic Society, Sixteenth and M Sts., Washington, D. C.

can tell the purpose for which they were prepared from this sentence, printed on the envelopes in which the sets of pictures come: "In the interest of lasting peace in the world's family of nations, a closer acquaintance is essential."

One night when the boys were getting ready for bed, I overheard them discussing the question of the causes of most wars. They decided that it was very foolish to have wars over the question of land. "I don't see," said the oldest boy, "what difference it makes who owns the land anyway. Of course there are different nations, but we are really all one family."

Another night, during a period when the Mexican situation was very acute, that same boy overheard his father reading a telegram which he and other clergymen of the community were sending to the President, urging that the matters under dispute be settled by arbitration rather than by force of arms. That night he prayed, "Help Mexico not to have a fight."

Then, after we had talked awhile about the difficulties caused by oil wells and other property rights in different nations, he said, "I don't see why we have to have so many different nations anyway. Why can't we all be the United States of the World? Then there wouldn't need to be wars any more."

Later he said, "Gee! I'd like to tell about all this in school, for we have been talking about how to stop wars. I might tell about what Argentine and Chile did to stop their war and about the Christ of the Andes. My, I'd like to have a statue like that on top of every mountain!"

The year before this, after his little brother had been saying over his "piece" about the flag which had been given him to learn for the Memorial Day exercise in public school, the eight-year-old said, "Well, mother, don't other people like their flags just as well as we like ours?"

We decided that they undoubtedly did, and that we should, therefore, always treat the flag of any nation with the same

respect with which we want other people to treat ours.

Again, on the Fourth of July, at the end of a joyous day, this same eight-year-old remarked, "I think 'My Country 'Tis of Thee' is a nice song, because anybody in the world could sing that about their own country just as well as we can sing it about ours, couldn't they? Because everybody loves their own country best, don't they?"

When the third boy was almost six he decided for a while that he did not care to say his prayer any more because he did not know what to say. I said very little about it and waited patiently. Then one day in looking through Amelia Josephine Burr's *Child Garden in India* he came upon the picture of the little Chinese boy, the little boy of India, and the African boy, kneeling together with bowed heads and hands clasped together. He brought the picture to me with the query, "Are these little boys praying?" I said they were. "What are they saying, Mother?" he asked.

Then I read him the "Good-night Prayer" across the page. He liked it and immediately set about learning it. Here was a prayer which any child in the whole wide world could make his own. At last he had found the words to express the desire in his heart, and for a long time he used this as his evening prayer:

"Our Father, you have given me  
So much of love and joy today,  
That I am thinking joy and love  
To other children far away.  
Wherever they lie down to sleep,  
Happy and tired with work and play,  
Yellow and brown and black and white,  
Our Father, bless us all tonight!"<sup>1</sup>

A great many times when the boys are almost asleep when I tuck them in, I will hear a very sleepy voice calling to me as I stand with my hand on the door-knob ready to shut the nursery door, "Mother, did I remember to say 'God bless everybody in the world'?"

And sometimes, as I close the door and come downstairs, I wonder if, at the end,

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<sup>1</sup>Used by permission of Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions.

the real test of the genuineness of our Christianity will be the extent to which our lives have said, "God bless everybody in the world."





IX

*Poems*



## LINES TO HER CHILDREN

*Written by Their Mother Before She  
Ever Saw Them*

### I. THE LAND OF WAITING

*(Written shortly before my marriage)*

Dear Baby of Mine, in the Land of Waiting,  
You never could be, were it not for our mating.  
May God, who cares for the soul of you,  
Help me to be so tender and true,  
So pure, so noble, so healthy and strong  
That he may be sure this is where you belong.  
May I be all he would want me to be,  
So he may be willing to trust you to me.

### II. You

*(To my baby a month before I saw him)*

Gleam of the light on the summer sea —  
Bright as the eyes of you.  
Glint of the sun on a white gull's wing —  
Pure as the soul of you.  
Flush of the evening's afterglow —  
Warm as the flesh of you.  
Rugged sturdiness of the pines —  
Strong as the strength of you.  
Faint stirrings in the rustling trees —  
Soft as the breath of you.  
Music of birds of the sunset time —  
Sweet as the voice of you.  
Pure as the glow before the dawn  
Shineth your spirit true.  
Clear as these radiant starry nights —  
So high, our aims for you.

May God his richest blessings store  
Here in my heart for you!

### III. I WONDER

I wonder if starshine and moonlight,  
The blue of the sea and the skies,  
The glow of the dawn and the sunset,  
Will gleam in our baby's eyes.

I wonder if winds in the tall pines,  
The bird songs in which we rejoice,  
The music of tiny waves breaking,  
Are making our baby's voice.

I wonder if God has been welding  
Our lives into one perfect whole,  
That he may unite us truly  
In the depths of our baby's soul.

### CHILDREN'S POEMS

*Arranged by Their Mother*

#### POEMS OF A THREE-YEAR-OLD

##### I

I look up at a pile of clouds  
Banked in the west —  
All shiny gold.  
I wonder who made them!  
First I think — maybe God did.  
I look again; then,  
Seeing they are so very lovely,  
I tell mother that I think  
My daddy did!

## II

I walk along a high hill with my mother.  
Soft pink clouds float in the sky  
Like fleecy blankets waiting to cover Merry Sun-  
shine  
When she snuggles down for the night.  
As the first whip-poor-will calls to us  
From across the valley,  
We start to go back home.  
I look up at my mother and I say,  
"Mother, if I were a cloud, I would wave at  
you!"

## III

I stand on a hillside  
As the red sun slips behind a big black cloud.  
After the sunset fades, Jupiter lights his lamp  
In the western sky.  
I look up, just to talk to God a little bit,  
And say, "Dear God, I think you must be up there  
In the sky, making the stars all out of gold;  
And I know what you use to make the sunshine—  
Happy boys!"

## IV

I help my little brother, playing with his blocks  
Out on the porch. Far below I hear the murmur  
of the brook.  
I stop my play—and down below the porch  
I see a little opening in the trees.  
I call to mother, "See! that is the path  
Where God comes through at night  
Out of the woods."

## V

One night I kneel to pray;  
With my head down on my hands I say,  
"Please be with God—help him to stay  
awake  
To take care of everybody  
And to be in their hearts!"

## VI

Slowly I struggle up a steep, steep hill,  
Pulling my heavy wagon.  
When I have almost reached the top  
I suddenly exclaim,  
"My, I am glad God put feet to me,  
So I can pull my wagon up this hill!"

## VII

I love to sail my boat—  
It is like sea-gulls flying.

## VIII

### AFTER MY BATH

After I dry myself I dart behind a bathrobe,  
Saying, "Mother, I am the moon, going behind a  
cloud."  
I climb upon a stool till I can see into the mirror;  
Then I say, "Mother, I am the sunrise coming up  
over the mountains."  
I climb down from the stool, and when I can no  
longer see myself,  
I say, "Now I am the sun going down behind a  
high hill."

## IX

One morning when I am dressing very early  
Before the stars and the last tints of dawn have  
left the sky,  
I leap upon my stool and seizing a curtain rod for  
my trumpet,  
I sing over and over and over again:  
"Thank you, God, for the morning star  
And the beautiful sunrise over the mountains."

## X

### MORNING SONG

Although I'm just a little boy,  
The morning fills my heart with joy.  
When I see its beaming light  
It looks like diamonds in the night;  
But when I get into my bed  
I see the stars shine overhead;  
And then I have no cause for fear,  
Because I know that God is near.

### POEMS OF A FOUR-YEAR-OLD

#### I

One night when Sirius was shining into my  
window,  
I said, "Mother, I know where the morning is—  
It's behind that big blue star up there!"

#### II

I love the dark—it is so blue;  
And out there in the blueness  
Night keeps such lovely clouds  
To use when it comes time  
To make the morning.

### III

I'm sure the moon is full of fairies,  
It is so round and white—  
No wonder that the fairies  
Love its silver light.

### IV

Kneeling one night to talk to God, I said,  
"Dear God, do you like the flowers  
That grow in the silvery light?  
The flowers sleep all through the night;  
Birds wake them up with morning light."

### V

Lying quietly in bed,  
I heard the wind whistle;  
And I thought,  
"No one can whistle like the wind  
Except God,  
Because he makes it blow.  
He makes the sunshine, too;  
And when the day is gone,  
He makes the moon and stars come  
out.  
He puts on their costumes  
Every night."

### VI

God is mighty!  
Nobody in the world  
Can do what God can do  
Except Jesus—  
And he is not like God  
Except he is just as good.



## VII

Mother — I want to be a bird  
So I can fly  
Up through the clouds  
To the stars!

## VIII

The hills are all humpity-bumpity;  
They look like horses galloping!

## IX

Our pine tree goes up  
And up and up  
And up and up  
And up and up  
And up and up  
And up and up  
And up and up  
To the clouds!

## POEM OF A FIVE-YEAR-OLD

Watching the rows  
Of rosy-tinted clouds  
Banked in the west,  
I say to my mother,  
"I know  
What makes the clouds like that!  
It's Jesus  
Raking up in heaven —  
He is raking up the clouds."

## POEM OF A SIX-YEAR-OLD

The sea gulls  
Are like water lilies  
Floating  
On the lake.

## POEMS OF A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD

### I

The leaves  
Are like little birds flying!  
They are like  
Big yellow butterflies.

### II

The moon  
Is a big candle,  
Which God lights  
At night.

### III

The sea gulls  
Are flying boats —  
Their wings, the sails,  
Their beak, the prow.

### IV

Do you know why the stars go by?  
Because God makes them.  
Do you know why the world turns round?  
Because God makes it.  
Do you know why the sun shines bright?  
Because God makes it.  
Do you know why we've moonlight nights?  
Because God makes them.  
Do you know why the leaves wither in winter  
So that the little new leaves can come back in  
the spring?  
Because God makes them.

## POEMS OF AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD

### I

#### HIGH SURF

The waves  
Are playing  
Crack-the-whip  
Today.

### II

#### THE VIKING SUN

The sun  
Is riding in a Viking ship today.  
I can see the oars  
Piercing the clouds  
As he rides over the sea.

### III

#### REALMS OF LIGHT

Riding one evening  
At sunset,  
I watched a radiant shaft of light  
Rise from the glow  
Above a hilltop.  
With a hushed voice I said  
"Mother, that looks like people's spirits  
Going up to God —  
To be purified!"

Months afterward  
When some one asked me  
How I expected  
To get to heaven  
When I die,  
I said, "My spirit  
Will go up to heaven  
On a shaft of light."



## X

### *A List of Helpful Books*

*For Christmas or Birthday Gifts or for  
Bedtime Reading*

#### **For the Very Little Ones**

DANIELSON, FRANCES WELD—*Object Lessons for the Cradle Roll.* (With fascinating nest of blocks.) The Pilgrim Press.

SMITH, E. BOYD—*Chicken World.* G. P. Putnam's.

—*The Farm Book.* (Delightfully illustrated by the author.) Houghton Mifflin.

BRYANT, SARA CONE—*Stories to Tell to the Littlest Ones.* Houghton Mifflin.

MARTIN, JOHN—*The Chubbies.* John Martin's Book House.

RANKIN, MARY E.—*A Course for Beginners in Religious Education.* Scribner's Sons.

PEABODY, LUCY—*Prayers for Little Children.* M. H. Leavis, P. O. Box 4, No. Cambridge, Mass.  
*World Friendship Nursery Series.* Missionary Education Movement.

NEVILL, E. MILDRED and WOOD, ELSIE ANNA—*Ah Fu: A Chinese River Boy.*

BARNARD, WINIFRED E. and WOOD, ELSIE ANNA—*Kembo: A Little Girl of Africa.*

SPRIGGS, ELSIE HELENA and WOOD, ELSIE ANNA—*The Three Camels: A Story of India.*

NEVILL, E. MILDRED and WOOD, ELSIE ANNA—*Esa: A Little Boy of Nazareth.*

LINDSAY, MAUD—*A Story Garden for Little Children*. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard.

*Books of Songs:*

CRANE, WALTER—*Baby's Bouquet*. Frederick Warne, New York City.

—*The Children's Opera*. Frederick Warne, New York City.

DANIELSON, FRANCES WELD and CONANT, GRACE WILBUR. *Song and Play for Children*. The Pilgrim Press.

**For Children Five Years Old**

VOERHOFF, CAROLINE—*All About Johnny Jones*. Milton Bradley.

SMITH, E. BOYD—*The Seashore Book*. Houghton Mifflin.

—*The Book of Railroads*. Houghton Mifflin.

BAILEY, CAROLYN SHERWIN—*For the Children's Hour*. Milton Bradley.

BRYANT, SARA CONE—*Best Stories to Tell to Children*. Houghton Mifflin.

SPRAGUE, LUCY—*Here and Now Story Book*. (Note Chapter "Five Little Babies.") E. P. Dutton.

CHANCE, LULU MAUDE—*Little Folks of Many Lands*. Ginn.

ENTWISTLE, MARY—*The Book of Babies*. United Council for Missionary Education, 2 Eaton Gate, London.

—*Children of Other Lands*. Oxford University Press.

HALL, KATHERINE STANLEY—*Children at Play in Many Lands*. (A book of games.) Oxford University Press.

BURR, AMELIA JOSEPHINE—*Child Garden in India*. Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions, West Medford, Massachusetts.

PRINGLE, MARY P., and URANN, CLARA A.—*Yule-Tide in Many Lands*. Lothrop, Lee and Shepard.

MILLER, ANN BEAUPRÉ—*My Travelship*. The Bookhouse for Children, Chicago, Illinois.

—*My Bookhouse*. (Six volumes of legends and stories of all nations. Beginning with "In the Nursery" it is admirably adapted for gift use in a large family, volume by volume, for children from three to twelve.) The Bookhouse for Children, Chicago, Illinois.

MARTIN, JOHN—*Prayers for Little Men and Women*. Harper and Brothers.

#### For Children Six Years Old and Older

JONES, RUFUS—*Stories of Hebrew Heroes*. The Swarthmore Press, Ltd., 72 Oxford Street, London.

—*St. Paul the Hero*. Macmillan.

—*The Boy Jesus and His Companions*. Macmillan.

JEWETT, SOPHIE—*God's Troubadour*. Crowell.

—*The Children's Story Garden*. Lippincott.

MILNE, A. A.—*When We Were Very Young*. E. P. Dutton. (Musical arrangement of fourteen songs, music by Freda Simmon.)

RICHARDS, LAURA—*The Golden Windows*. Little, Brown.

ALDEN, RAYMOND McDONALD—*Why the Chimes Rang*. Bobbs-Merrill.

—*The Boy Who Found the King*. (Note chapter "The Seven Kingdoms and the Hidden Spring.") Bobbs-Merrill.

BAILEY, CAROLYN SHERWIN—*Stories Children Need*. Milton Bradley.

STOCKING, JAY T.—*The Golden Goblet*. The Pilgrim Press.

—*The City That Never Was Reached*. The Pilgrim Press.

WARNER, GERTRUDE CHANDLER—*Star Stories for Little Folks*. The Pilgrim Press.

CARPENTER, FRANK G.—*Around the World with the Children*. American Book.

BAILEY, CAROLYN SHERWIN—*Every Child's Folk Songs and Dances*. Milton Bradley.

COLSON, ELIZABETH—*Friends of Ours*. Missionary Education Movement.

PERKINS, LUCY FITCH—*Twin Series*. (Beginning with *The Dutch Twins* and including stories of the twins in every land. Also *The Cave Twins*.) Houghton Mifflin.

DADMUN, FRANCES—*Living Together*. Beacon Press.

DAVISON, SURETTE and ZANZIG—*Book of Songs*, Concord Series No. 14. (An excellent selection of the best songs for children to learn.) Schirmer, Boston, Massachusetts.



**Books Which Help Children Appreciate  
the Gifts from the Past**

VAN LOON, HENDRIK WILLEM—*Story of Mankind*. Boni and Liveright.

DOPP, KATHERINE E.—*The Tree Dwellers*. Rand, McNally.

—*The Early Cave Men*. Rand, McNally.

—*The Later Cave Men*. Rand, McNally.

—*The Early Sea People*. Rand, McNally.

—*The Early Herdsmen*. Rand, McNally.

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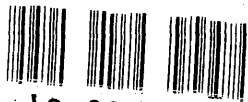


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